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SANCTIFICATION IN ROMANS CHAPTER SIX

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Division of English Bible

Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Theology

Approved:

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by

Raymond Larry Shelton

July 1968

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the central themes of St. Paul is the concept of union with Christ. The apostle deals with this subject at length in Romans chapter six. Using the rite of baptism as a basis, Paul shows how the believer becomes united with Christ in an interpersonal sharing of spirits. He then points out the implications of this relationship for sanctification. Thus sanctification is vitally connected with the relationship of the believer to Christ.

A. THE PROBLEM

The Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the concept of sanctification as presented by Paul in Romans chapter six. The problem presented by Paul at this point is the meaning of union with Christ as expressed through baptism and the implications of this union for sanctification. In view of the interpersonal implications of union with Christ, some conclusions must be drawn concerning the meaning of these interpersonal relationships.

The Importance of the Study

An understanding of the interpersonal aspects of the believer's relationship to Jesus Christ is essential for a correct interpretation of Paul's thought concerning sanctification. The prevalence of the idea

that holiness is an entity in itself has led to the substantialistic understanding of sanctification. Such concepts are impersonal and unsatisfactory for a true explanation of the Pauline concepts of an interpersonal union with Jesus Christ. This study seeks to present a satisfactory explanation of Paul's thought concerning sanctification as an interpersonal relationship to Jesus Christ, and to provide an alternative for the spatial and substantialistic interpretations of sanctification.

B. THE APPROACH

The Method of Procedure

The general method of procedure will be, first, an investigation of Old Testament literature and theology for the purpose of discovering the prevalence and usage of interpersonal relationships between Yahweh and Israel. Such a study will illuminate the similarities between Old Testament experience and the interpersonal concepts of Paul.

Secondly, an analysis of the text of Romans 6 will be conducted on the basis of both inductive research and a survey of relevant secondary sources.

Thirdly, a study will be made of the concept of empathy as a means of establishing interpersonal relationships. This concept will be related to the union of the believer with Christ.

A further study will be directed toward the insights of hermeneutical concepts for the purpose of understanding the bases for the re-enactment of historical events.

Finally, particular problems in the area of linguistics and human experience will be treated on the basis of the findings of the research of this aforementioned material. The insights gained in this application will be focused on the theological implications of sanctification as understood as an interpersonal relationship. An attempt will be made to explain how these insights may contribute to the understanding and presentation of the theology of sanctification in the Wesleyan movement.

The Limitation of the Subject

This study will not be an encyclopedic survey of traditional theology on this subject, but it will deal with those psychological, scriptural, and interpersonal concepts which are relevant to an interpersonal understanding of the believer's union with Christ.

The Sources of Research

The sources of data have been books and articles on biblical theology of both the Old and New Testaments, psychological treatises, linguistic studies, hermeneutical sources, classroom lectures, and personal conversations and experiences. A selected bibliography will be presented for the purpose of encouraging further research into this problem.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD TESTAMENT EMPHASIS ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. THE MOSAIC PERIOD

The basic character of the religion of the Old Testament is interpersonal. Israel was not united to Yahweh primarily by her trust in the promises of the covenant when divorced from Yahweh Himself, nor by her faithful performance of the ritual prescribed in the Law, but she was united by the personal character of the interaction between the Creator and His elect nation as expressed in the interpersonal covenant relationship. This section is concerned with various emphases upon this relationship as seen in the Mosaic period.

The Definition of the Covenant

Before proceeding to the theme of the interpersonal relationships in the covenant, it would be wise to notice the meaning of berith. The importance of this word is indicated by its frequency of usage. The Hebrew word is used 278 times, and berith is rendered as diatheke in the Septuagint in all passages except two. These exceptions are Deuteronomy 9:15, where the Greek is martyrion, and in I Kings 11:11, where entole is used.¹ Davidson says that the term berith occurs nearly

¹John Peterson Milton, God's Covenant of Blessing (Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana Press, 1961), pp. 1,8.

300 times in the Old Testament.²

The etymology of berith is somewhat unclear. The verbal root behind berith is baraya, but its meaning is uncertain. Frequently, however, baraya has been related to the Akkadian baru, "to fetter."³ Davidson concurs that the word "bind" more properly fits berith.⁴ Berith is believed by some to be derived from the Hebrew barah, which carries the meaning "to cut," or "to cleave." In the simple form the verb barah means "to cut," but in the intensive stems it takes on the meaning of "to eat."⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs translate barah as "eat."⁶ The intensive form of barah also means "to choose," and this conveys the idea of cutting and separating. Berith may have originally meant "to cut" and may have later come to include "to choose or select."⁷

The ceremony of making a covenant is commonly called karath berith, or cutting a covenant. This may suggest a covenant by sacrifice as in Psalm 50:5. The Sinaitic covenant was enacted and ratified by

²A.B. Davidson, "Covenant," A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898), p. 509.

³Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 136.

⁴Davidson, op. cit., p. 509.

⁵Samuel Lee, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (London: Duncant Malcolm, 1844), cited in Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, p. clxi.

⁶Brown, Driver, Briggs, op. cit.

⁷Alan Earl Marsh, An Inductive Study of the Nature and Purpose of the Biblical Covenant (Asbury Theological Seminary, Th.M. Thesis, 1961), p. 10.

the offering of sacrifices (Ex. 24:1-8). The covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 reflects the covenant ceremony in which the slain animals were cut in two and each half laid over against the other. A flaming torch, symbolizing the Lord as one party to the covenant, then passed between the pieces.⁸ This ritual reflects the traditional pattern in the making of covenants. E. Kautzch says:

There can be no doubt that berith belonged at first to secular speech and meant "dissection;" that is, the dissection of one or more sacrificial animals, so that the parties concluding the agreement passed between the pieces and invoked upon themselves the fate of these animals in case of a breach of covenant.⁹

It seems, then, that "cut," "choose," and "bind" are all involved in the concept of berith. The cutting may indicate the division of the victim as a symbol of the proposed bond between the parties of the covenant; and the binding may connote the obligations and trust the covenant has imposed upon both parties.¹⁰

Although the covenant relationship often involves individuals of equal status (Gen. 21,26; I Sam. 20; II Sam. 9), the religious berith involves a relationship between God and another party.¹¹ Mendenhall shows that there is a marked resemblance in form between the Mosaic

⁸Milton, op. cit., p. 4.

⁹E. Kautzch, Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1911), p. 59.

¹⁰Marsh, op. cit., p. 11.

¹¹Milton, op. cit., p. 4.

covenant and the Hittite suzerainty treaty in the second millenium B.C.¹² This type of covenant was a political agreement between a suzerain and his vassal. The purpose of the suzerainty treaty was to establish a firm relationship of mutual support between the two parties. Although the treaty established a relationship between the two kings, only the vassal took the oath of obedience. It seems that the vassal was obliged to trust in the benevolence of the sovereign and in his faithfulness to protect and deliver him. In this relationship of trust and obligation, the covenant form expressed a personal relationship rather than an objective, impersonal statement of law.¹³

In the Bible there are two covenants which follow the form of the suzerainty treaty, and these are found in the Decalogue and in Joshua 24. The covenant of Moses imposed specific obligations upon the tribes or clans,¹⁴ while also binding Yahweh to specific obligations, although the covenant viewed the past acts of Yahweh in history as abundant evidence of His protection and support of Israel. The form of the prologue, stipulations, and witnesses of the covenant in Joshua 24 correspond closely with the form of the suzerainty treaty.¹⁵

In view of the form of the suzerainty treaty and its similarity on the pattern of the Decalogue, one sees that the berith at Sinai was

¹²George E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East (Pittsburgh: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955), pp. 24-50.

¹³Ibid., pp. 30,33.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 42.

bilateral. It was Yahweh who initiated it and it became a mutual agreement by man's response. It is important to emphasize here that the covenant was not simply Yahweh's pledging of Himself, but it was ratified only when man responded to it. It was conditioned upon man's obedience to it; it was something which God had entered freely and which He could withdraw from the nation at any time that it refused to be conformed to His will.¹⁶ The covenant was Yahweh's agreement, that is true, but it involved man's response to its stipulations. When the book of the covenant was read, the people replied, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient" (Ex. 24:7). After they had agreed to be obedient to its demands, then Moses sprinkled the blood on Israel to seal the covenant and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words" (Ex. 24:8). Milton realizes that although it was Yahweh's covenant, its effectiveness depended on the people's response. He concludes:

The direction of the covenant is from God to man. The covenant originates with Him; He speaks the words; He lays down the conditions; it is His covenant, which takes on the aspect of mutuality when the people respond by accepting the terms and by promising to be obedient.¹⁷

The covenant at Sinai, then, was a religious berith. Its primary meaning is "a divine constitution with signs and pledges."¹⁸ It was a

¹⁶Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 37, 44.

¹⁷Milton, op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁸Brown, Driver, Briggs, op. cit., p. 136.

co-operative agreement initiated by Yahweh and ratified by Israel's response with the results that Israel became personally related to Yahweh's people and He was their personal Lord.

The Institution of the Covenant

In the period of the patriarchs, there was much emphasis in the Northwest-Semitic religion upon the close personal tie between the clan father and his god. The god was the patron deity of the clan, and the establishing of a personal and contractual relationship between the clan chief and the clan god was a widespread phenomenon. Many Northwest-Semitic names illustrate this personal relationship by forming compounds with 'ab' ("father"), 'ah' ("brother"), and 'amm' ("people" or "family"). Such names as Abiram/Ahiram ("My Divine Father/Brother Is Exalted"), Eliab ("My God Is a Father to Me"), Abimelech/Ahimelech ("My Divine Father/Brother is My King"), and Ammiel ("The God of My People Is God To Me") illustrate the ancient nomad's sense of kinship between clan and deity. The god was the head of the house, and the members of the household were his family.¹⁹

The patriarchs expressed a deep sense of personal experience in their relationship to Yahweh. "The Genesis picture of a personal relationship between the individual and his God, supported by promise and sealed by covenant, is most authentic."²⁰ The patriarchal religion

¹⁹John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 90.

²⁰Ibid., p. 91.

was a clan religion in which the clan became the family of the patron God. Israel sensed a feeling of tribal solidarity between the people and God.²¹

In the covenant at Sinai, Yahweh gave definitive expression to the binding of the people to Him in their unique knowledge of Him. Yahweh's disclosure was not grasped speculatively and was not expounded in the form of teachings about Him, but in the experience at Sinai and the historical events which this experience commemorated, He disclosed Himself as He broke in on the life of Israel in His dealings with them and molded them according to His will.²² Thus the foundation of the normative and enduring covenant relationship was in Yahweh's gracious acts. It can scarcely be overemphasized that Yahweh's offer to covenant with Israel was an act of grace. Nothing that Abraham had ever done had merited Yahweh's promise to him, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3); and it was beyond his wildest dreams to be given the promise of innumerable offspring when he did not even have a son (Gen. 15:5; 16:1), or the promise of all the land of Canaan while he was only a nomad (Gen. 17:8). Yet, in spite of Abraham's lack of merit, Yahweh elected him and his seed, delivered them from bondage, and formalized His promises to them in the gracious covenant at Sinai. Nevertheless, both Abraham and Israel had to respond

²¹Ibid., pp. 92,93.

²²Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 37.

to Yahweh's offer. Abraham's obligation was to insure that circumcision would be faithfully performed on every male child of his descendants and those foreigners of his house as a sign of his covenant with Yahweh (Gen. 17:10,11), and to commit himself entirely to Yahweh's purposes.

Eichrodt says:

There is emphatic indication that the covenant cannot be actualized except by the complete self-commitment of Man to God in personal trust. Hence the obedient performance of the rite of circumcision takes on the character of an act of faith.²³

In the covenant agreement with Israel at Sinai, Yahweh's ready assistance and faithfulness in delivering Israel from Egypt were to be continued while the behavior of the people was subjected to definite standards.²⁴ Thus these standards of the Law were not arbitrary, negative statutes which stifled Israel's freedom. On the contrary, the Law itself was a gift of Yahweh's grace.²⁵ Yahweh's central manifestation of His love for Israel was that He bestowed on her His Word which guaranteed that His guidance would be present in all situations of Israel's history.²⁶ The Law was the expression of the will of Yahweh and was the means of ordering the nation He had chosen in a manner befitting His people, and in a manner suitable for the highest well-

²³Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 288.

²⁴Ibid., p. 38.

²⁵Carl E. Braaten, New Directions in Theology Today: Volume II, History and Hermeneutics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 108.

²⁶Eichrodt, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 296.

being of Israel.²⁷ The negative nature of the prohibitions of the Law forbade that which abolished the relationship which Yahweh had created in the covenant with His elect nation. Gutbrod continues:

Thus the object of the law is to settle the relationship of the covenant-nation and of the individual to the God of the covenant and to the members of the nation who belong to the same God. Because this nation has been chosen by this God this is to be done by excluding those things which invalidate or disturb the relationship.²⁸

In the word of the Law, Yahweh established a direct link with His people. Even His acts of jealousy and judgment were derived from His love, for they were attempts to prohibit the seduction of the object of His choice. Viewed from this perspective, the Law is seen not to have been an oppressive element of tyrannical divine authority, but a direct proof of love, since it gave Israel tangible evidence of her elect status and her superiority over all pagan attempts to proclaim God's will (Deut. 4:6; 30:11ff).²⁹

Since the Law was the direct command of Yahweh spoken out of His love for Israel, any breach of it was an outrage against Yahweh Himself. In pagan religions the law was invested with all the authority of the national god, such as in the Code of Hammurabi; but in Israel the Law was the very Word of Yahweh. It was the divine Lawgiver who

²⁷W. Gutbrod, "Law in the Old Testament", Bible Key Words, Gerhard Kittel (ed.), vol. 4 (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 30.

²⁸Ibid., p. 27.

²⁹Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 296, 298.

laid down the Law, and every breach of it was an offense against Him.³⁰

In the new legal system established by the covenant, with its markedly personal quality, transgression of the Law carried no connotation of formalistic, juristic objectivity and reparation by a corresponding equivalent. The transgression was not the flaunting of an impersonal, juristic norm, but it was a conflict between two wills, the divine and the human.³¹ Sin was a failure to fulfill one's vows to obey God.

Wright says:

Sin is the violation of covenant and rebellion against God's personal lordship. It is more than an aberration or a failure which added knowledge can correct. It is a violation of relationship, a betrayal of trust.³²

The basic character of sin, then, is action contrary to the norm of the Law of Yahweh. Three basic words for sin illustrate this concept: hatah', "To miss the mark;" 'avon, "to veer or go aside from the right way," "irregular or crooked action" with the idea implicit that the agent is aware of the culpability of his action; and pesha', "rebellion or revolt."³³ Sin to the Israelite was unhealthy, for it rendered one incapable of living with others,³⁴ or with Yahweh. When a person insisted upon acting in a manner contrary to God's order, he negated the

³⁰Ibid., vol. 1, p. 75.

³¹Ibid., vol. 1, p. 383.

³²G. Ernest Wright and Reginald Fuller, The Book of the Acts of God (Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1960), p. 93.

³³Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 381.

³⁴G. Ernest Wright, The Challenge of Israel's Faith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 76.

covenant purposes of fellowship with Yahweh.

The seriousness of individual sin was compounded by the belief that through ties of blood and common interest the individual was regarded as being so deeply imbedded in the community that an offense by him not only affected his own relationship with God, but also that of the entire community.³⁵ It did, in fact, affect God's attitude toward the community and it had adverse effects upon the well-being of the community.

In the face of estrangement from Yahweh by sin, the problem arises as to how sin is to be removed. The ancient religions generally conceived of sin's being removed by mechanical purification, but Israel's faith in Yahweh freed her from domination by these dynamistic concepts and gave her the concept of a personally conditioned forgiveness of sins. Even though the ritual of the Law had elements which seemed to remove sin ex opere operato by the faithful accomplishment of external procedures using elements such as water (Lev. 14:5; Num. 8:7; 19:9), fire (Num. 31:22f), blood (Lev. 16:14-19; Deut. 21:1ff), or the scapegoat (Lev. 11:21f), these elements did not involve the material removal of substantial sin. They were simply means of portraying the removal of sin, which was actually the restoration of an undisturbed relationship with the personal covenant God. The expiation of sacrificial atonement was not a mechanistic removal of sin independent of the forgiveness of the sin. The acts of atonement were part of God's free forgiveness by

³⁵Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), pp. 264, 266.

which He restored fellowship with the sinner.³⁶

The forgiveness of Yahweh, however, was conditioned upon the repentance of the sinner. Repentance necessitated a deep and contrite confession of sin (Lev. 5:5).³⁷ The acts of external sacrifice were not effective unless they were accompanied by a penitence which resulted from true conversion.³⁸ Nothing was effective in restoring the relationship with Yahweh until the breach caused by unconfessed and unforgiven guilt was closed.³⁹ When the sinner humbly acknowledged his sin and recognized that since sin broke his relationship with God it could not remain while his relationship with God was restored, then Yahweh could forgive. But forgiveness was conditioned upon confession and repentance.

It was through sacrifice that the penitent expressed his personal self-abasement and submission to God's sovereign will.⁴⁰ But it was the personal repentance of the sinner and the personal forgiveness of Yahweh, however, which restored the broken relationship. The basic element in the restoration of this relationship was love of Yahweh as it was

³⁶Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 444f.

³⁷J. Barton Payne, The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 298.

³⁸H.H. Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament (Manchester: John Rylands Library, 1950), p. 87.

³⁹Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 309.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 445.

expressed practically in a personal surrender to the Law (Deut. 6:4f). Just as transgression threatened to disrupt the present order, love upheld it because love was the essence of fellowship with God, which was the purpose of the covenant order.⁴¹

In view of man's responsibility to Yahweh through the Law, it is clear that Yahweh not only pledged Himself to Israel, but that Israel was to accept her obligations for the maintenance of this bilateral relationship. As long as Israel was willing to worship no other gods and to observe the prescribed standards of cult and conduct, then Yahweh would continue to be faithful and to assist and deliver her.⁴² Yahweh's promise, "You shall be my people and I will be your God," provided life with a goal and history with a meaning. Because of this definiteness the fear of arbitrariness and caprice in the Godhead was excluded from Israel. With Yahweh, unlike pagan gods, men knew where they stood, and an atmosphere of trust and security was created in which Israel found strength to grapple with life in a hostile environment.⁴³

In the covenant Yahweh united the tribes into a strong relationship of solidarity. The normative expression of the divine will in the covenant bound together the component parts and subordinated the entire nation to Yahweh's purposes.⁴⁴ In this tribal solidarity was

⁴¹Ibid., vol. 1, p. 256.

⁴²John L. McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1965), p. 154.

⁴³Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 38.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 39.

the necessary unity and strength for the survival of the nation as well as the cooperation needed to fulfill the requirements of the standards of behavior and the cultus which were prescribed in the covenant.

The purpose, then, of the institution of the covenant was to consummate Yahweh's redemptive acts of deliverance from Egypt and to establish a pattern of behavior upon which Israel could properly relate to Him.⁴⁵ The covenant provided the pattern of organization of the community around the Law, and in this sense it constituted the society which Yahweh had elected and provided for the institutions of the sacred shrine, cult, and covenant law in which Israel's religion found its expression.⁴⁶

The Explanation of the Covenant

It is clear from the preceding statements that the conception of covenant, with its resemblance to the social and political law of the day, was used to depict the relationship of Yahweh to His people. This relationship had been established in the exodus when Yahweh had chosen Israel for His own purposes, and the "covenant was a way of making a picture out of the relationship, so that the people would understand what it meant."⁴⁷ The maintenance of the covenant depended on

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 37.

⁴⁶Bright, op. cit., p. 146.

⁴⁷Wright and Fuller, op. cit., p. 87.

righteousness, the recognition of Yahweh's personal lordship.⁴⁸ Thus the covenant agreement was simply the external normative form by which Israel's personal relationship with Yahweh was maintained and described.

The most important aspect of the covenant was its basis in the interpersonal relationship between Yahweh and Israel. As we have seen, in the Old Testament the covenant was more than a mere contract, for it established an artificial blood kinship between the parties involved. The word which was used to describe covenant affection and loyalty, hesed, was also used to describe the affection and loyalty of kinsmen.⁴⁹ Jonathan and David expected hesed of each other on the basis of the covenant which existed between them (I Sam. 20:8, 14f). Hesed is the brotherly comradeship and loyalty which one party of a covenant must give to the other. In the imagery of God as the Father-Shepherd of His people is an excellent example of the kind of behavior implied by hesed. Eichrodt says, "The father-son relationship assumes hesed as the kind of conduct binding on its members" (Gen. 47:29).⁵⁰ Thus hesed is the proper means of describing the benevolent attitudes and beneficent actions appropriate among persons bound together in a covenant relationship. The term connotes kindness and mercy, but it also involves a specific relationship whose existence implies a mutual obligation.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 87, 93.

⁴⁹McKenzie, op. cit., p. 154.

⁵⁰Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 233-235.

⁵¹Stuart D. Currie, "Koinonia in Paul's Covenant Vocabulary," Austin Seminary Bulletin, Faculty Editor, 78, March, 1963.

An excellent example of the type of relationship involved in the covenant is the ancient Semitic rite of blood-covenanting, which involved the closest possible relationship between two friends. Trumbull says the blood-covenant was "a form of mutual covenanting, by which two persons enter into the closest, the most enduring, and the most sacred of compacts, as friends and brothers, or as more than brothers, through the inter-commingling of their blood."⁵² He continues by showing that the primitive mind had a belief in the possible inter-communion with God through an inter-union with Him by blood. God is life and all life comes from Him. Blood is life, and therefore may be a means of inter-union with God. As the closest and most sacred of covenants between man and man is possible through an inter-flowing of a common blood, so the closest and most sacred of covenants between man and God, the inter-union of the human nature with the divine, is possible through the offer and acceptance of a common life in a common blood-flow.⁵³

This concept of sacral communion is also evident in the rite of sacrifice, which signifies personal entry into a new association. Through the sacral communion mediated by the sacrifice, Yahweh entered into a special relationship with His people and gave them a share in His own life.⁵⁴ This communion, however, is not to be confused with

⁵²Trumbull, op. cit., p. 4.

⁵³Ibid., p. 47.

⁵⁴Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 157.

the pagan concept of magical power residing in the sacrificial victim in which men regarded the sacrificial meal as the most intimate possible means of contact with the power of a god. In the covenant on Sinai, the confirmation of the union with Yahweh in the covenant sacrifice led not to a physical and magical conception of the divine presence, but to a personal and moral fellowship with the Lord whose will shaped and regulated afresh the life of His people. This communion with Yahweh through the sacrifice was concerned with the presence of God and the personal union with Him from which all life and strength derive.⁵⁵

The rites of pagan nature religions concentrated on receiving mysterious "power" from the gods. It was an invariable mark of these rites that they had to be continually repeated, and they were effective by the ex opere operato method of their being correctly carried out. In the Israelite covenant the sacrifice was not repeated in order to maintain the cycle of nature or to appease Yahweh, for it created the covenant relationship for all time at its first performance. Further sacrifices simply commemorated the establishment of the covenant and expressed Israel's faithfulness to it. Correct observance of the covenant ritual was important, but the covenant relationship was maintained by Israel's moral correspondence to the will of Yahweh as expressed in His word at Sinai. The purpose of the Israelite covenant was to establish and maintain the personal communion between God and man,

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 154, 157.

not simply to effect the impersonal transference of "power." In the newly established covenant relationship at Sinai, the nation submitted itself to the utterly personal lordship of Yahweh.⁵⁶ Any concept of Yahweh's involvement with His people in terms of popular nature religion was rejected. The covenant excluded the pagan idea that a continuity of nature existed between the national God and his worshippers. Israel's religion was one of election in which the grace of Yahweh established them in their personal kinship to Him through His mighty deliverance from Egypt and the enduring covenant order initiated at Sinai.⁵⁷

This concept of a covenant based on Yahweh's grace provided an inherent defense against the danger of a legalistic distortion of the relationship into a mere agreement between two partners of equal status. The awe with which Israel viewed the sovereignty of this personal God as He acted in history stopped all thought of a mere mercenary agreement or of a relationship of parity with Him. Any attempt to substitute personal merit for the unmerited favor of Yahweh was effectively stifled by the very thought of the sovereign Lord of the universe in His lovingkindness condescending to enter into a covenant relationship with men. Such condescension and grace in the covenant, says Eichrodt, "lays claim to the whole man and calls him to surrender with no reservations."⁵⁸ The very peculiarity of the compact of blood-friendship

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 43, 44.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 42.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 45.

demanded that he who entered it must be ready to make a complete surrender of himself in loving trust to him with whom he covenanted.⁵⁹

This trust was based on the belief that Yahweh had covenanted with Abraham and had fulfilled His promises in the exodus and conquest.

Israel was rescued from Egypt by Yahweh's gracious act and was now under His lordship. She was a separate people delivered by Yahweh (Num. 23:9; Deut. 33:28f), and secure in the continuing protection of His mighty acts (Judg. 5:11; Ps. 68:19ff). Nowhere was election attributed to any merit on the part of Israel but only to the unmerited favor of Yahweh. Israel's very existence was based on its trust in Yahweh's grace in bringing them into the covenant as His people.⁶⁰

Although Israel had not merited the covenant and Yahweh had given it strictly by grace, it was by no means an amoral covenant. As was shown above in the definition of berith, the covenant was morally conditioned upon the response of the people; it was not simply a racial covenant. The key to entrance into the covenant was faith in Yahweh and subordination to His Law, as this was signified and sealed by circumcision (Gen. 17:11, 12). St. Paul emphasized this contingency upon faith in his letter to the Galatians. Only those who followed Abraham in his faith in Yahweh were his sons in the covenant (Gal. 3:7-9, 29). It was the spiritual lineage of Abraham who participated in the covenant

⁵⁹Trumbull, op. cit., p. 220.

⁶⁰Bright, op. cit., p. 133.

by faith, not merely his physical descendants; others who were not Israelites were to be included in the blessings of Abraham, for Yahweh said that all the nations would be blessed through him (Gen. 12:3). Thus it was by faith that Israel had entered the covenant and only by faith could she remain in it. The maintenance of the covenant by faith necessitated a proper moral response. Yahweh promised to give Canaan to Israel if she obeyed His commandments. He said:

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day; and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God (Deut. 11:26-28a).

Yahweh initiated the covenant by grace, but Israel could maintain her obligations to it and thus remain in it only by unqualified moral obedience to the covenant stipulations. It was divinely ordained (Ex. 6:7), yet conditioned upon the human obligation to accept its demands and fulfill them (Ex. 19:7, 8; 24:7, 8).⁶¹ The tragic consequences which followed the fallacy of believing that the covenant was unconditioned will be seen in the messages of the prophets.

The Participation in the Covenant

Faith. The basic character of the Covenant at Sinai was its emphasis on faith. In the Covenant agreement, Yahweh said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me..." (Ex. 19:5). Snaith explains how this stipulation

⁶¹Payne, op. cit., p. 296.

was based on faith:

But why must Israel obey the Ten Commandments? . . . The reason is given in the verse which precedes the Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. 20:2). The essence of the faith, therefore, is . . . that Jehovah was and is their Savior, and He has saved them, saved them now in order that they may do His Will . . . being truly (sic) thankful to a Husband-God who has never been anything else than faithful from the beginning.⁶²

Throughout his ministry Moses placed the emphasis on faith (f. Heb. 11: 24-29). Yahweh's statement of this redemption of the people from Egypt introduced the Covenant, and the people responded with appropriate faith to accept it before they ever knew the detailed, external conditions (Ex. 19:8). The legal conditions which followed were only an application and demonstration of the basic requirement of faith.⁶³

The essence of the faith of Israel was not that they were coerced to act according to the laws of morality because Yahweh was moral. It was that Yahweh had been and still was their savior, and He saved them to do His will.⁶⁴ The fundamental element of faith, then, is trust and surrender to the Person of Yahweh. "Faith as interpreted by the Old Testament is always the response of man to the primary activity of God."⁶⁵

The Niph'al stem of 'mn is used to denote the relationship of

⁶²Norman Snaith, Mercy and Sacrifice: A Study of the Book of Hosea (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1957), pp. 54, 55, 57.

⁶³Payne, op. cit., p. 308.

⁶⁴Snaith, op. cit., p. 55.

⁶⁵Artur Wesier, "Faith," Bible Key Words, Gerhard Kittel (ed.), Vol. 3 (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 30.

man to God. In passages where this usage is found, 'mn expresses not only the correctness of external behavior toward God, but also the element of disposition, "and it is not restricted to single action performed only once, but applied to the whole of man's relationship to God."⁶⁶

In the hiph'il he'e^emin, "to believe", the usage in relation to persons is associated with the idea of trust. This trust includes the recognition of the claim upon one which is involved in the relationship of friend, servant, or other relations, and at the same time also the fact that this claim is binding on the one who himself trusts. Thus the reciprocal interaction makes trust a two-sided relationship. In the Old Testament he'e^emin is used only for a personal relationship, for "behind the word which is trusted there stands the man who is trusted."⁶⁷

The hiph'il is also used to express the relationship between God and man. The reciprocal relationship between God and man is part of the essence of faith, but this relationship is never initiated by man. Faith often involves the acknowledgement of God's demand and man's obedience to it (Deut. 9:23; Ps. 119:66).⁶⁸

Often 'mn sums up all the ways by which men express their relationships to God. In Isaiah 43:10, this relationship is expressed

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 8.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 12.

as knowing Him. In Hosea 4:01, in addition to the acknowledgement of God, the element of emotion is included. Also, in faith one's relationship to God excludes all others. It involves worshipping God, "with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deut. 6:05). Thus faith in the Old Testament means "a relationship to God which embraces the whole man in every part of his outward behavior and his inner life."⁶⁹

On the basis of the definition of faith as interpersonal trust and surrender along with a material sharing of selves in a personal relationship, it is clear that the law was given in order to provide a means by which man could express his part in the relationship by obedient subjection to it. Neither the faith nor the obedience bring any reward as such, but "the faith-relationship in itself is expounded as the righteous fulfillment of the Covenant fellowship on Man's part."⁷⁰ In this way justification in the Covenant was based not on proper observance of the Law, but on the intimate interpersonal relationship between man and God. Faith took on the character of the attitude by which man actualized his relationship with God. Eichrodt concludes, in this manner:

Thus the Covenant which was bestowed upon the people of Israel in the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham acquires its inner vitality not from cultic event but from the conscious spiritual and physical attitude of the member of Covenant Community toward the promise of the one who established the Covenant.⁷¹

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 13-15.

⁷⁰Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 72.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 279.

Circumcision. In Genesis 17:10⁷² God established circumcision as the sign of participation in the covenant of Abraham. Since the Sinaitic covenant was not an event independent of the Abrahamic covenant, but a renewal and re-fashioning of the earlier one,⁷² circumcision continued to be a token of membership in Israel and of association in the covenant. Mendenhall says that circumcision was not originally an obligation, but a sign of the covenant, like the rainbow in Genesis 9. It simply served to identify the recipients of the covenant and to give concrete proof of its existence.⁷³ However, Genesis 17:14 makes it very clear that circumcision was necessary from the first and its omission resulted in exclusion from the covenant community.⁷⁴

The precise significance of circumcision was its usage as a symbol of regeneration (Lev. 26:41). Circumcision was the outward sign that one's sin had been removed (Deut. 10:16) and that the person was now rightly related to Yahweh, this right relationship being equivalent to the removal of sin. The mere external performance of circumcision by those whose hearts were in rebellion against Yahweh was no more effective, however, than was their unworthy offering of sacrifices. "The rite was designed as 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace'; and if a man remained uncircumcised in heart he

⁷²Ibid., vol. 1, p. 56.

⁷³Mendenhall, op. cit., p. 36.

⁷⁴Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 57.

lay still, in God's eyes in his uncircumcision (Jer. 9:25, 26)."⁷⁵

Circumcision is no longer a sacrament of salvation for the Christian Church (Gal. 5:02). Its basic purpose as a ceremonial sign and seal for one's initiation into the Covenant relationship with God, however, is retained by the New Testament transmutation of circumcision into the sacrament of baptism.⁷⁶ Baptism symbolizes a new covenant and it accompanies justifying faith. As Paul says, "In Christ ye were circumcised with a circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism" (Col. 2:11, 12). Payne says that the two sacraments perform the identical function of serving as symbols of regeneration by identification with Christ.⁷⁷ In the Old Testament one had to believe and be circumcised to the Covenant; in the New Testament one has to believe and be baptized. Thus circumcision in the Old Testament symbolized right relationship with Yahweh in the covenant, while baptism takes over the role of being the external sign of an interpersonal relationship with God in Christ in the New Testament.

Ceremony. One of the basic elements in animal sacrifice was the attempt to restore Israel's relationship to Yahweh. An effective sacrifice had to be the organ of the spirit of the offerer; it had to be more than a mere outward act. The Law required a penitent spirit

⁷⁵Payne, op. cit., p. 392.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 392.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 393.

and the confession of sin before the sacrifice could achieve anything. In the offering of the sacrificial animal, the offerer conceived of himself as dying along with it--not physically, but spiritually. "The death of the victim symbolized his death to his sin, or to whatever stood between him and God, or his surrender of himself to God in thankfulness and humility . . . It was thought of as the medium of . . . his fellowship with God."⁷⁸

It is imperative to understand that the sacrifice was in no way a means of placating God. Even though the sacrifice was made to obtain forgiveness of sins, one must remember that the real sacrifice of self-surrender and repentance had to be made by the sinner himself. In offering the sacrifice and in identifying himself with it, the sinner changed in his attitude toward God. He turned back to God and repented. "The gift-sacrifice which we bring to God is ourselves."⁷⁹ In response to man's repentance and self-offering, God accepted the animal sacrifice as a token of His reception of the offerer who had identified himself with it and forgave the sinner of his offenses. In this forgiveness God did not merely look upon the sinner as if he had offered himself, but He looked upon him as a true self-offering. It was not simply the sacrifice which changed God's attitude toward man, but it was man's changed attitude toward God. This forgiveness did not result in a

⁷⁸Rowley, op. cit., pp. 87, 88.

⁷⁹Snaith, op. cit., p. 118.

positional righteousness in which God looked at man through the sacrifice, but it resulted in an actual righting of interpersonal relationships between man and God. The symbol was the animal; the reality was the changed relationship between God and man.

The annual feasts were another expression of Israel's participation in the covenant. They were one of the most significant forms of ceremonial response, by which the faithful among Israel sought to demonstrate their commitment to Yahweh. In observing these feasts, Israel was commemorating Yahweh's mercies and His past acts of deliverance. The Passover, for example, was a memorial of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 12:14; 17:24-27), "a night to be much observed unto Yahweh for bringing them out from the land" (Ex. 12:42).⁸⁰ These ceremonies express the historical character of Israel's religion since they became a type of anniversary of the historical events in which Yahweh's power had been made manifest.⁸¹

Perhaps the clearest explanation can be given of Israel's memorial feasts by contrasting them with pagan nature religions. In these religions the gods were identified with the natural forces and they had no ethical or moral value. In attempting to explain the patterns of nature, these religions resorted to myths as a means of explaining

⁸⁰Payne, op. cit., p. 403.

⁸¹H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (Manchester: John Rylands Library, 1950).

natural cycles. Since the earthly society was believed to be dependent on the movements of nature, the worshippers attempted to influence favorably the rhythmic course of events. This was accomplished by the cultic use of myth. Through the re-enactment of myth, the cosmic powers were appealed to as sustainers of the status quo. The worshippers believed that the faithful performance of the ritual acts effected the renewal of the cosmic powers and enabled them to act. A sympathetic relationship was established through which the pagans used mimetic or sympathetic magic to coerce the cosmic powers to act favorably. The cult became the means of maintaining the status quo and of keeping the cycle of nature going. There was no concept of gods acting in historical events. These ancient paganisms had no sense of a divine purpose in history.⁸²

In contrast, Yahweh was not a localized, natural force. He was the Creator of nature and was powerful over all the universe; He was active in nature but not identified with it. Since He was not continuous with nature, the mythical ritual acts based upon continuity were irrelevant for Yahweh worship. In Israel's cultic ritual there was the commemoration of Yahweh's past events. Israel conceived of history not cyclically, but as a linear development of God's purposes. In the cultic recital, Israel recollected what Yahweh had done in the past (Deut. 6, 26; Josh. 24). They told of His acts, but there was no

⁸²Dennis Kinlaw, "History of Israel," Class notes, 1967.

attempt to coerce Him to do again what He had done before. The pagan mythical cult attempted to reproduce the cosmic cycle, while Israel did not. The contrast was between recapitulation in myth and remembrance in Israel. The recital in Israel's cult was not to support the status quo, but to challenge all of the status quo which was not in harmony with God's will.⁸³ The credos of the recital served as a prelude to the reaffirmation of the covenant in the ceremonies. The feasts were actually the re-enactment of the past events of redemptive history,⁸⁴ but this re-enactment of the past events was for the purpose of making the past contemporaneous. By remembering what Yahweh had done, Israel projected herself into the past and re-experienced the past in the present. There was no attempt to recapitulate past acts, but the focus was on re-experiencing a once-for-all past act. By symbolically re-enacting past events, such as in the Feast of Tabernacles, Israel gained a fresh, contemporaneous experience of the meaning of Yahweh's past acts for their present redemptive history. By doing this, Israel re-affirmed and re-experienced the profound meaning of the covenant relationship.

The Basis of Holiness

The Old Testament word kadash is used to express the concept of holiness. Girdlestone says that although the words "sanctification"

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Bright, op. cit., p. 115.

and "holiness" are often used popularly to represent moral and spiritual qualities, the basic idea of holiness is the "position or relationship existing between God and some person or thing consecrated to them."⁸⁵

Brown, Driver and Briggs say that the word possessed originally the idea of separation or withdrawal. In its Old Testament usage it contains the following meanings: (1) the apartness, sacredness, holiness of God, (2) the separateness of places set apart as sacred by God's presence, (3) the holiness of things consecrated at sacred places, (4) persons who are holy or sacred by their connection with holy places, (5) times consecrated to worship, (6) things and persons ceremonially cleansed, and so separated and sacred.⁸⁶

In primitive Semitic usage "holiness" seems to have expressed the ceremonial separation of a thing from common use. This concept is expressed in comparative religions as "taboo." In the specific Old Testament usage, however, holiness is not related to visible objects, but to the invisible Yahweh and to places, seasons, things, and persons as they are related to Him. Thus, that which is holy is separated from all that is human and earthly by its relationship to God. "Nothing is holy in itself, but anything becomes holy by its consecration to him"⁸⁷

⁸⁵Robert Baker Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), p. 175.

⁸⁶Brown, Driver, Briggs, op. cit., pp. 871f.

⁸⁷J.C. Lambert, "Holiness", International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.

Lambert quotes Skinner as saying, "Holiness, in short, expresses a relation, which consists negatively in separation from common use and positively in dedication to the service of Jehovah."⁸⁸ Thus kadash is applied to places, times, and persons with the meaning in each case of a relation or contact with God. In this connection Girdlestone says:

Thus the Sabbath day was holy because God rested thereon, and it was to be set apart by Israel as a pledge that He had sanctified or set apart the people to Himself (Ex. 31:3); the mountain of the Lord was to be called holy because He would dwell there (Zech. 8:3). . . . the firstborn, by being hallowed or set apart, were regarded by God as His own (Num. 3:13) . . .⁸⁹

Yahweh was regarded as holy in the sense that He was a Being who from His nature, position and attributes was to be set apart and revered as distinct from any other god.⁹⁰ Israel did not have an abstract quality of holiness, but it considered that Yahweh did what was holy and thus He was holy. This holiness of Yahweh was conceived as the impingement of the "Other" upon the life of the world, and with particular emphasis on Israel. Israel conceived of the holy God as "God-in-life-and-history." Holiness was inseparable from the relationship of a holy God with Israel.⁹¹

Thus one sees that in the Old Testament only God is holy.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Girdlestone, op. cit., p. 176.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹B. Davie Napier, From Faith to Faith (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1955), p. 179.

Nothing is holy apart from its relation to God. It was the presence of God that hallowed the Temple, the holy land, and the holy city. The holy objects of the Temple derived their sanctity from their relationship to God. In the same manner no creature attained holiness in and of himself. "Any holiness that the creature may know will be derived, the result of a relationship to a holy God."⁹² Holiness is not an abstract quality that is imparted to a creature, for the Hebrews did not think in abstractions. It is the character of existence which exemplifies the separation from all that opposes God and the relationship to a God who is holy. One becomes holy when God is related to him, and God's holiness is reflected in him.

B. THE PROPHETIC PERIOD

The Problem of Theology

In spite of the gracious and personal nature of the Mosaic covenant, in the later period of the monarchy Israel's relationship to Yahweh disintegrated and the ensuing internal sickness destroyed northern Israel and severely threatened the national religion of Judah. Bright says:

With the progressive disintegration of ancestral social patterns, the Sinaitic covenant with its austere religious, moral, and social obligations, which had been largely forgotten by many of Judah's citizens, to whom Yahweh had become the national guardian whose function it was, in return

⁹²Dennis Kinlaw, "Old Testament Roots of the Wesleyan Message," Further Insights Into Holiness (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1963), p. 44.

for meticulous cultic observance, to give the nation protection and blessing (Isa. 1:10-20).⁹³

The problem was complicated, however, by the theological emphasis placed upon Yahweh's eternal covenant with David. It was believed that Yahweh had chosen Zion as His eternal dwelling and had promised David an eternal dynasty. The effect of all this was the belief that Judah's existence did not rest in obedient response to Yahweh's gracious acts in the past, but in His unconditional promises to David for the future. The purpose of the official cult was no longer for atonement, but for the assurance of the well-being of the nation. Paganizing influences had pervaded the internal structure of Yahwism so that the state cult became the spiritual support and defense of the existing order.⁹⁴ This misunderstanding was the result of an unconditioned and thus amoral concept of the covenant. Yahweh's promise in Genesis 12 did involve prediction, for He said, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This promise, however, was conditioned on Israel's response. Israel was God's instrument only as a nation of faith and obedience. The failure of Israel to recognize the elements of contingency in the covenant, then, led the nation into this fallacy of the unconditional interpretation of the covenant relationship.

In the late eighth century, however, the Assyrian threat called the entire national theology into question. Could Judah really rely on

⁹³Bright, op. cit., p. 272.

⁹⁴Ibid.

the promises to David? But Judah's reaction was a blind confidence that Yahweh would protect them, yet this confidence was without an inner expression of faith and trust in Yahweh Himself.

The Work of the Prophets

At this perilous juncture in Judah's history there arose the towering figure of the prophet Isaiah. He denounced the social evils of the nation (Isa. 1:21-23; 3:13-15; 5:8,23; 10:1-4), and the materialistic nobility (Isa. 3:16-4:1; 5:11f, 22), and the immoral unfaith of the people (Isa. 5:18-21). He was convinced that because Judah had not responded to Yahweh's grace in righteous behavior, but had sought to satisfy His demands through the lavish cultus, she would be turned over, like a useless vineyard, to the thorns and briars (Isa. 1:10-20; 5:1-7).⁹⁵ Isaiah said that it was not cultic observance but faith which was basic to the relationship between Yahweh and man (Isa. 7:9; 28:16). Faith involves partnership with God in such a way that the believer has audacious courage which prompts him to trust Yahweh even in a seemingly hopeless situation such as that of Ahaz in the face of his hostile neighbors (Isa. 7). Isaiah's motto was trust in Yahweh's promises, even in the midst of chastisement (Isa. 7:9; 14:32; 28:12,16f; 30:15).⁹⁶

Contemporary with Isaiah in Israel was Hosea, who taught that religion was first of all a matter of relationship with Yahweh. His

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 274.

⁹⁶Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 279, 282.

major contribution lay in his stress on the personal character of the relation between God and Israel. On God's side this relationship involves love, compassion, and gracious condescension; "on man's side, it consists of dutiful love and humble trust . . . To love God with all that a man is and has, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices, more indeed than anything else."⁹⁷

In describing this personal relationship, Hosea said that a right relationship with Yahweh from the human side is, according to Eichrodt, the manifestation in practice of the direct sense of inward mutual belonging, an awareness which dominates the whole being, and drives it far beyond all these requirements of duty which arise from rational reflection, into unreserved surrender.⁹⁸

Hosea spoke of this relationship in terms of "the knowledge of God." By this he meant not a merely intellectual knowledge of God and His will, but the practical application of love and trust as this is seen in the analogy of the association of a true wife and her husband. The lack of this knowledge is the major reason for the coming judgment. It is also the experience and recognition of Yahweh's redemptive acts, which should lead to obedience and trust, and it can describe the process of getting to know someone through acquaintance and experience. This knowledge is not the contemplated knowledge of the wise, but a perceiving which at the same time always includes an interior relation

⁹⁷Snaith, op. cit., p. 52.

⁹⁸Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 291.

to the one known. In the case of man's knowledge of Yahweh, this is a relation of surrender and obedience; in that of God's knowledge of man, the relationship is one of care and election. It corresponds to the use of yodea' where it denotes a link between persons whose lives are intimately related.⁹⁹ Because Yahweh "knows" His people, He has introduced them into a permanent relationship of intimate personal involvement with Himself, and the result is the permanent demonstration of His loyalty and kindness. The command, "Thou shalt know," is based upon the previous experience of "I have known thee" (Hos. 13:4f). This expression recalls the covenant of Yahweh given in His prevenient love, and it also removes the obligation for obedience from any association with juristic thinking and incorporates it into the relationship of moral trust.¹⁰⁰

The basis of a right God-Man relationship was seen by Hosea as a "covenant of love in which everything depends on the motion of the heart and soul, and the slightest unfaithfulness, the smallest breach of trust, causes irreparable damage."¹⁰¹ This is a relationship of response to God's revelation of Himself. Fulfilling one's personal love-relationship based on one's knowledge of Yahweh is thus the essence of fulfilling the moral and spiritual requirements of the covenant, according to Hosea.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 293.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 294.

Hosea expressed this love-relationship between man and God by means of the imagery of marriage. In this analogy of marriage to the relationship between Israel and Yahweh he showed that the relationship of law is most accurately expressed in terms of a living fellowship of love, "which demands the total allegiance of man as the object of that love, and can never be satisfied with the formal fulfillment of obligations The quite irrational power of love (is) the ultimate basis of the love relationship."¹⁰² In his experience of married life with Gomer-bath-Diblaim, Hosea learned that behind all moral demands and sacrificial customs, there is a personal relationship with God. Although he realized the depth of Israel's sin and the deserved wrath of God toward Israel, Hosea thought of God as a Husband and a Father who could forgive. In his own personal life, Hosea realized the condemnation and judgment are not the end. He knew that his marriage with Gomer had come to an end with her faithlessness and persistent apostasy. "But Hosea was prepared to make a fresh start; he was prepared to enter into a new covenant. Thus Hosea knew that God also was prepared to begin again with Israel and to enter into another covenant with her."¹⁰³ Hosea realized that all the adulteries of his own wife did not destroy his love for her. In the same way God still loved Israel.

¹⁰²Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 251, 252.

¹⁰³Snaith, op. cit., p. 55.

Hosea thought that if he and Gomer could only go back to their first days, to "the love of their espousals" in the words of Jeremiah 22, then all would be well. In the same way Yahweh remembered Israel's first faithful, marriage love and how she had loyally followed Him in the wilderness. Hosea believed that God would take Israel away from the land of Canaan and hedge her up so that she could not get back to her lovers (Hos. 2:6, 7, 14). When she realizes her big mistake she will appreciate the faithfulness of the Lord and will renew her trust in Him.¹⁰⁴ Thus God's will to maintain fellowship with Israel even when she was an adulteress and a harlot demonstrates the inadequacy of all merely legal attempts to describe man's relationship to God.¹⁰⁵ Yahweh's relationship to Israel in the covenant was an interpersonal love-relationship and Hosea has beautifully described this as the love of a husband for his wife.

During the following century, at the peak of the Assyrian empire, the spiritual leaders emphasized that a faith-relationship with Yahweh was a solid bulwark against the world of appearance. Faith was treated as a profoundly existential concept as contrasted with all those attitudes which rely on appearances and which despise faith as a hopeless waiting for something which will never come. Faith creates a link with the Lord of all life, who is the source of real power.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁰⁵Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 252.

Habakkuk combined his understanding of faith with that of Isaiah in witnessing as Eichrodt shows:

the right interior attitude to the divine order, arrived at by faith, is the only basis for the true life of the covenant people, for amid the collapse of all human power . . . this attitude becomes aware that a transcendent life has been bestowed upon it.¹⁰⁶

Habakkuk saw that although Babylon seemed proud and powerful, "his soul is lifted up, it is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4). Faith derives its strength from Yahweh, not from transient political might.

In the latter part of the prophetic period, Jeremiah expounded upon the necessity for individual faith in God. He observed that man could not trust in himself or in other men (Jer. 10:23; 17:5), but that he must give glory to Yahweh and trust Him (Jer. 13:16; 17:7).¹⁰⁷ Faith has an ethical connotation in Jeremiah's teaching. It is parallel with upright conduct and in opposition to "hypocritical mendacity" (Jer. 5:2f).¹⁰⁸ Faith thus sums up all that is included in one's right attitude toward God. Jeremiah showed that the unnaturalness of the national apostasy was its unfounded rejection of a covenant of love from which nothing but salvation and blessing had flowed over the nation (Jer. 2:2ff). The folly of this conduct was that Israel no longer "knew" Yahweh, and had "allowed herself to be deluded into stepping

¹⁰⁶Ibid., vol. 2, p. 285.

¹⁰⁷Payne, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁰⁸Eichrodt, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 285.

outside the inward relationship of trust and surrender" (Jer. 4:22).¹⁰⁹ In abandoning her relationship of intimacy with Yahweh, Israel followed the bad example of the priests (Jer. 2:8). "They who prided themselves on knowing God's law, were in reality alienated from his will, because they had not surrendered themselves inwardly in true knowledge of him."¹¹⁰ Jeremiah was disillusioned with a priesthood who busily performed the cultic rituals, but who had no inclination to return to the ancient paths (Jer. 6:16-21). These priests knew Yahweh's law, but were unwilling to hear His word (Jer. 8:8f). Jeremiah saw that the covenant stipulations had been lost behind the cultic externals (Jer. 7:21-23), and that the half-hearted religion of his day could never relate to the God who promised, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). A return to the "old paths" of inward relationship with Yahweh could only come about by inward conversion, for only Yahweh could transform the heart so that Israel might open themselves to His love and in a renewed relationship enjoy glorious intimacy with Him (Jer. 24:7; 31:33f).¹¹¹

In the exilic and post-exilic periods faith continued to be stressed as the basis for a personal relationship to Yahweh. But this attitude of faith takes on the special form of "faith-obedience." The prophet Ezekiel emphasized the importance of keeping the law in which

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 294.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 295.

the will of Yahweh was revealed (Ezek. 18). The obedient ordering of life by the norm of the Law was the practical expression of one's faith that future salvation would come as the fruit of obedience to Yahweh's Law.¹¹² This obedience would be made possible by the new heart which Yahweh would give them along with the presence of His Spirit (Ezek. 36:26, 27). It is evident that the basic element in this new emphasis on the Law is the personal relationship of man with the Spirit of Yahweh.

C. SUMMARY

The covenant in the Old Testament was maintained by Israel's faithfulness and obedience to the personal will of Yahweh and by Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel. It was primarily a mutual, bilateral agreement between Yahweh and Israel. The character of this covenant was personal, and this characteristic found its expression in the personal will of Yahweh as established in the Law and by Yahweh's interest in the history of Israel as His chosen nation. As long as Israel expressed her love for Yahweh in personal surrender to the Law, Yahweh continued to be faithful to assist and deliver her. The distinctive mark, then, of the covenant was its basis in the inter-personal relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Through the covenant, Yahweh expressed the personal union which existed between Himself and

¹¹²Ibid., p. 301.

His nation. This interpersonal relationship gave Israel her assurance of Yahweh's favor and her power for living in the turmoil of a hostile environment.

CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF SANCTIFICATION IN ROMANS SIX

A. THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Just as the interpersonal relationship with God was expressed in the Old Testament by obedience to the Law of Yahweh and was signified by circumcision, so in the New Testament Paul expresses this interpersonal relationship in terms of union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection as signified by baptism. Thus baptism and circumcision are the signs of one's participation in the covenant relationship with God.

It is the purpose of this chapter to delineate Paul's concept of being free from sin through union with Christ as this idea is presented in Romans Six. The problem of Romans 6:1 will be stated, and then the chapter will be analyzed with an emphasis on the rite of baptism as a means of expressing the believer's interpersonal union with Christ. The hermeneutical and psychological implications of this union with Christ will then be treated for the purpose of explaining their significance for the believer.

The Structure of Romans 6

The argument in chapter 6 grows out of Paul's desire to clarify any misunderstandings which might have arisen from his statements in 5:20, 21: "Law came in to increase the trespass; but where sin increased

grace abounded all the more, so that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The problem that Paul anticipates is that since the sin which was increased in abundance by the Law made possible the abounding grace of God, why should transgression not be continued and increased in order to allow God's grace to be more abundantly displayed? Paul proceeds to discount the implied slander, first of all, by an indignant negative, "By no means!" In 6:2b he begins his argument based on the fact that for believers whose lives have been changed by their dying sin, the very idea of living in sin is a preposterous contradiction in terms.¹ In view of this preliminary glance at the problem, then, one notes that chapter 6 develops an argument to satisfy the objections which might possibly have arisen from 5:20, 21.

The recurrence of similar phrases in 6:1 and 15 suggest that these verses begin sections dealing with different aspects of the same problem. Romans 6:1 states, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" Thus Romans 6:1-14 shows how through baptism one has been incorporated into Christ and is thereby set free from the dominion of sin. In Romans 6:15 a similar phrase occurs, "What then? Are we to sin because we are not under the law but under grace?" Paul here states, in Romans 6:15-23, that since this

¹Franz J. Leenhardt, The Epistle to the Romans (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961), p. 152.

freedom from sin has been given, one can thereby serve righteousness.

Thus one sees that this chapter was not meant primarily to explain baptism, but to answer the question presented in 6:1. The strongest answer with which Paul could meet that question was by referring to baptism and what its implications were for the believer.²

The Freedom from Sin

Analysis of Romans 6:1-14. The rhetorical questions of 6:1 are raised to enable Paul to refute the possible objections of the antinomians who insisted on perverting his statements concerning the grace of God. His refutation in verses 2 and 3 takes the form of an exposition concerning the implications of the fact of the baptismal event. Paul shows that for a Christian while still remaining a Christian to sustain habitually the same enslaved relationship to sin after baptism as he had had to sin before baptism is an impossibility. A Christian cannot be dead and alive to sin at the same time. Death involves separation of a person from his former environment. The preposition, apo, here prefixed to the verb shows that the believer has "died away from" sin. There has been a cleavage between the person and sin as the reigning monarch (5:20). This cleavage precludes continued life under the dominion of sin. This death to sin, however, must not be construed as an effect produced on the believer once for

²Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), p. 233.

all by the death of Christ. Paul does not mean the death of sin as a physical state which precludes the possibility of further transgression. The "death to sin" of which he speaks continues only so long as it is kept under the control of the fact of the death of Jesus with all its implications. The believer may free himself from the power of faith and return to the old way. Only as long as his life is kept under the gracious power of Jesus Christ will the believer continue to identify himself with Christ.³

The means by which this cleavage from sin was effected was the baptism of the person into Jesus Christ (6:3). Paul states elsewhere, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Thus the believer shares the historical experiences of Christ by means of a "faith-union" with Him.⁴ The act of baptizing the sinner into Christ so that the person shares Christ's death is the means of separating the person from sin.

Baptizō contains much significance at this point (6:3). This word was used in the classics to refer to a smith who tempered a piece of hot iron by dipping it into water. It also was used of Greek soldiers placing the points of their swords in a bowl of blood. In the LXX (Lev. 4:6) one reads, "The priest shall dip (baptō) his finger in water to cool his tongue. From these examples of the usage of the

³Frederic Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1883), p. 238.

⁴F.F. Bruce, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963), p. 137.

word baptizō, one can derive the following definition: "the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition."⁵ Thus the believer is introduced through baptism into a vital union with the death of Jesus Christ with all its implications (6:4a). Christ's death recapitulated His entire life of victory over sin, and the victory was culminated in the cross. Thus when the believer shares in the death of Christ, he shares not simply a single event, but an entire process of life. Through his interpersonal union with Christ, the believer shares the continuing victory over sin which was the totality of Christ's experience. This interpersonal union with the totality of Christ's experience alters the relationship of the believer to his previous environment of subservience to sin. The believer is now in a new environment, Jesus Christ, and thus he no longer lives in the environment of sin.⁶ The result of this change of environment and influence is that the believer's life is no longer lived in relation to sin, but in relation to Christ. He cannot continue this relation to Christ if he refuses to abandon his relation to sin. This is why the believer cannot continue to serve sin in order to increase the abundance of Christ's grace; the two kinds of life are mutually

⁵Kenneth S. Wuest, Romans in the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), pp. 96f.

⁶Ibid., p. 97.

contradictory.

In 6:4b-10 Paul explains the purpose of the burial with Christ in baptism. The hina clause in 6:4b denotes that the purpose of baptism into Christ is that as Christ rose from the dead through the agency of the glory of the Father, so the Christian, by means of this same supernatural strength, should walk in a new life, the leading feature of which should be complete crucifixion of the old habits of sin.⁷ The baptism of the believer into Christ's death also results in the believer's sharing in Christ's resurrection. The reason is that if one is united with Christ, this union involves sharing all that Christ experienced. If a person is united, sumphutoi, with one aspect of Christ's personal history, because of the nature of this union, he is united with all the other aspects of Christ's personal history. This union means "to cause to grow together," "planted together," "united with;" it is the same term used to express the grafting of a scion into a tree.⁸ It would be ridiculous to graft a limb and then ungraft it. In the same way, the believer is not united with Christ at the point of His death and then divorced at another point of His personal history. The union with Christ's death flows into the continuous and subsequent union with Christ's

⁷H.P. Liddon, Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), p. 109.

⁸J.H. Thayer (trans. and ed.), A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Company, 1889), pp. 597f.

resurrection.⁹ This means, in short, that if one has shared in Christ's death, since he is now in Him, he also shares His resurrection. This resurrection is not only a future, but is a present new life of consecration to Him.¹⁰

The use of baptism here to denote the reasons for complete separation from sin shows that by being united thus with Christ, one conducts the funeral service of his old life. This burial is the formal announcement that the person is dead; he is completely separated from the world in which he formerly lived. Thus baptism is the testimonial of the cessation of the old way of life. The form of this baptism seems to have been immersion.¹¹ Beet says:

From the earliest sub-apostolic writings we learn that immersion was the usual, though not the only valid, form of Baptism. Barnabas (about A.D. 100) says in ch. xi. of his Epistle: 'We go down into the water full of sins and defilement, and we go up bearing fruit in the heart.'¹²

Headlam comments on baptism by saying that it must have been an

⁹Robert A. Traina, Class notes on Romans, 1966.

¹⁰Wilber T. Dayton, "Romans," Wesleyan Bible Commentary, vol. V, Chas. W. Carter (ed.), (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 41.

¹¹Arthur Headlam, "The Theology of the Epistle to the Romans," Expository Times, Vol. 6 (1894-95), p. 356; William Sanday, International Critical Commentary, vol. xxxii (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896), p. 154; Traina, op. cit.; William Barclay, The Letter to the Romans (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), p. 84; C.H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932), p. 87.

¹²J.A. Beet, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (New York: T. Whittaker, 1901), p. 180.

impressive ceremony as the converts were immersed in the water as a symbol of the washing away of sins. Paul uses the analogy of the grave and the baptismal tank to explain the putting on of Christ. By appropriating in his own life the act which Christ accomplished, the believer rids himself of the old way of life in sin and begins a new life in Christ.¹³

In the early Church, the rite of baptism was a testimonial to a drastic break with the old way of life. When a person was baptized, he publicly acknowledged that he was a Christian and that he was willing to bear the suffering and persecution that accompanied this confession. He was so willing to break with the old way of life that he participated in this act which symbolically expressed his participation in the death of Christ and all that this death involved.¹⁴ In true baptism the believer ratifies his own personal covenant connection between himself and the death and resurrection of Christ.¹⁵ By the means of identifying oneself personally with Jesus Christ as symbolized by baptism, the believer transferred himself from his relationship to Adam, as expressed in chapter 5, and incorporated himself into the new way of life in relationship to Jesus Christ. "It effects a rupture in the malevolent solidarity which makes men

¹³Headlam, op. cit., p. 493.

¹⁴Traina, op. cit.

¹⁵H.C.G. Moule, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans (Cambridge: The University Press, 1889), p. 113.

enslaved to the inheritance of sin, and through it God associates the believer with the death of Christ."¹⁶ In the ceremony of baptism the old life is buried and the way is cleared for the new life; the believer is linked with the death of Christ only in order to become linked with His life. This baptism of the believer is thus connected with a precise historical event. The death of Christ on the cross, from God's point of view, "contained by implication the death of all whom baptism would associate with it."¹⁷

Paul is recalling the fact that Christ was in line with the sacrifices instituted by God in the Old Testament; in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, these sacrifices find their fulfillment and their end. As the one true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, is set before men, they are enabled to see the condemnation of sin which the cross implies.¹⁸ In an interpersonal sharing with Christ in this death, the believer then experiences his own true death to sin. Thus by an empathic union with Jesus Christ as signified by baptism, the believer subjectively incorporates himself into the personal history of Christ, and by means of this union he appropriates Christ's death to sin into his own life. This vital union brings into actuality for the believer what the death of Christ has accomplished

¹⁶Leenhardt, op. cit., p. 156.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 154.

In 6:5 one finds a general statement which is elaborated in verses 6-10. In 5a one notes the negative aspect of being united in the death of Christ, and this emphasis is elaborated in verses 6 and 7. In 5b one finds the positive aspect which is elaborated in the verses dealing with the resurrected life with Christ in 8-10.

The purpose, then, of this dying with Christ is expressed in 6:6: "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin." The important concepts in this verse are the "old man," "the body of sin," and "destroyed." Through the believer's having become united with Christ in His death, the "old man" has been destroyed with the result that the believer is no longer enslaved to sin. The word used here for "old" is palaios, meaning "old in point of use," rather than archaios, meaning "old in point of time." Trench defines the word as "old in the sense of more or less worn out."¹⁹ It describes the kind of thing that is used up, useless, worthy to be discarded. The former self which lacked the inspiring life of God had no more usefulness, and was thus "crucified." This crucifixion was a completed act, as is denoted by the aorist tense.

The word sōma is often used by Paul to denote a living body (Rom. 4:19; I Cor. 6:13; 9:27; 12:12-26). It is sometimes alternated with melē, "members," and the two are associated with sin (Rom. 7:1;

¹⁹Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), p. 252.

I Cor. 6:19). These two words are commonly used to denote the body as the instrument of feeling and willing. "Hence wherever somā is used with reference to sin or sanctification, it is the outward organ for the execution of the good or bad resolves of the will."²⁰ The word hamartias is here used in the genitive case with a possessive usage. Thus "body of sin" is the human body which belongs to sin.²¹ This body which has previously been owned by its master, sin, can no longer continue its work of service to sin because it has been freed from the ownership of sin. "Sin" may be still in existence objectively, but as far as the body is concerned, it can no longer give commands.

It is this "body which belongs to sin" which has been "destroyed" as a result of baptism. This word "destroyed" is katargeō. The idea involved is "to render inoperative, inactive, void." Its radical meaning is "to make void or inert," and it negates the idea of agency or operation. When something is "rendered inoperative," it can no longer operate. In I Corinthians 13:8, the word is used in the sense that the prophecies shall fail, or have no more work to do; in II Timothy 1:10 Christ abolished death, and He left no more work for it.²² The "body of sin" is done away insofar as it is an instrument of sin,

²⁰Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 68.

²¹Wuest, op. cit., p. 101.

²²Vincent, op. cit., p. 32.

although the material of the body is not destroyed.²³ The union of the believer in the death of Christ to sin renders the body inert and inoperative as far as its service to sin is concerned.

This "body of sin" is not the "old man," the organism or system of evil dispositions. Whereas the "body" is the organ of feeling and willing, the "old man" is the former way of life of the self. This "old man" is the pattern of self as influenced by sin. This old configuration of evil attitudes and dispositions which is the "old man" is obliterated, "crucified." It no longer exists. The "old man" before the believer was united with Christ was figuratively another person than he is now. The "old self" has been crucified and a new self has emerged to "walk in newness of life" (6:4b). The "body" which formerly expressed the feelings and motivations of its old master, sin, now is the organ of expression of a new master (6:13). The old, worn-out self no longer expresses its desires through the body which was enslaved to sin, but the new self which is "alive to God (6:11b) expresses the will of its new master. Since the body is serving a new master, Christ, it must express the desires of a new self which has been created in place of the "old man" which was crucified.

In verse 7 Paul borrows a figure from common life to express the fact that the self is set free from the power of its old master, and can now consecrate the body to a completely new use. A person who

²³J.H. Thayer (trans. and ed.), A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Company, 1889), p. 836.

is dead no longer has a body to put at the service of sin; he is legally exempted from obeying that master, who had formerly made free use of him. It would be vain for a master to order a dead slave to steal, lie, or kill. The slave could not be punished for refusing to obey, since he was removed bodily from the influence of the master. The believer who in Christ is dead to sin can no longer serve sin any more than a slave deprived of his body by death could continue to execute the orders formerly given him by his wicked master.²⁴ The person, through the historic fact of dying to sin by being identified with Christ on the cross, "has died" (aorist) to the power of sin with the result that he is "justified," or set free from it. The present result is that he is in a state of freedom from his former master, and it is his responsibility to maintain that freedom from moment to moment.²⁵ He not only "has died," but he must remain in this condition of freedom.

Thus the "body of sin" in Romans 6:6 is not simply the body in itself, since Paul can refer to the body as a fit instrument for service and sacrifice to God (Rom. 6:13; 12:1); nor is it the body as the corrupted mass of concupiscence which has to be continually controlled, since Paul says that it was "rendered void and inoperative;" nor is it sin conceived of figuratively as having a substantial body

²⁴Godet, op. cit., pp. 246f.

²⁵Wuest, op. cit., p. 103.

which must be crucified and rooted, since the genitive of possession precludes this possibility by denoting that sin is the master of a body which is something other than sin itself. The "body of sin," then, is a literal expression referring to the physical body as it is ruled by sin. "The 'sinful body' is the self as the organization of the sinful impulses inherent in the flesh."²⁶ This body is not eradicated or annihilated, but it simply changes its function from servitude to sin to servitude to righteousness. Dodd says:

If now we think of the "sinful body" as a self organized out of bad and disharmonious sentiments, "to crush the sinful body will be to disintegrate these bad sentiments, and so destroy the self as built out of them, in preparation for the organization of a new self about the centre supplied by Christ to the believer."²⁷

After showing how that the believer has died to the dominion of sin, Paul moves on to express what is involved positively in this change of existence which is expressed in 6:5b, "We shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." The particle, de, marks the logical progress from the explanation of the participation in Christ's death to the explanation of the participation in His life. The participation in Christ's death was a past event (vv. 5a, 6a), while participation in the life of Christ is described as an event to come (8b).²⁸ This "shall live" in verse 8 is the logical future. Just as

²⁶Dodd, op. cit., p. 90.

²⁷Ibid., p. 91.

²⁸Godet, op. cit., p. 247.

Paul has linked the believer to both the death and resurrection of Christ in verse 5, so he now continues this thought. If the believer has died with Christ, and Paul proves that he has in verses 6 and 7, then it follows that he will live with Christ. Just as the death with Christ is a present reality, so the life with Christ is a present possibility. Through baptism the "old man" has been replaced by the new man who lives in Christ. "Through baptism we have been received into the new age, which began in the resurrection of Christ."²⁹

This new life is lived "with him," autō. This is the personal pronoun expressing instrument of means. The believer lives the new life by the means of Christ. He derives his spiritual life, this new pattern of existence, from Christ.³⁰ Jesus communicates Himself to the man who has appropriated His death by the faith-union expressed in baptism, and thus fills the void which was left by the death of the old self.³¹

In verse 9 Paul substantiates the statement of verse 8. The believer who has been united with Christ is certain that he will share the life of Christ because he knows the positive fact that the resurrection of Christ has taken place. Because he is united with Christ and because he knows that Christ has been resurrected, he knows

²⁹Nygren, op. cit., p. 235.

³⁰Wuest, op. cit., p. 103.

³¹Godet, op. cit.

that he, too, will share this Christ-life which has permanently broken the dominion of death. There is no return to death for the Risen One, and there is no return to the death of sin for the one who continues to be united with Him.³² "The new life with Christ will be the same which Christ Himself lives, a life inaccessible to death."³³ Christ breathes His own life into those who are united with Him, so that His life which was freed from the dominion of death when He arose, by virtue of that same freedom might free all His people.³⁴ The certainty of Christ's resurrection is the pledge of certainty that all who are united with Him will share this same resurrection with all its vitality and power over sin and death.

The reason why Christ's death was fatal to sin is explained in verse 10. Jesus successfully resisted sin during His entire life, but as the adverb ephapax indicates, His death unto sin was once for all, not a struggle which continued through His life. The crucifixion event, however, was the culmination of Christ's entire life and a final decision to do the will of God. In accepting death unto sin, Christ obediently fulfilled the purposes of the incarnation by sharing man's history completely, even to the extent of experiencing death. By successfully conquering sin in His own personal history, Christ

³²Ibid., p. 248.

³³James Denney, "Romans," The Expositor's Greek Testament, W. Robertson Nicoll (ed.), vol. II (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), p. 633.

³⁴John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), p. 227.

overcame the power of sin. Once this crisis was past, Christ no longer could be troubled by sin, and He could live solely for the purpose of glorifying God and communing with Him.³⁵ The importance of Christ's death is seen in the claim which sin had over humanity. Mankind was enslaved to it so that God in man had to die in order to make possible the kind of empathy which would release man from its dominion. By identifying with the death of Christ, the believer allows Christ's death to become the victory over his own sin. The idea is not that a penalty had to be paid to God or Satan in order to gain man's release, for there did not have to be a recipient. But man through empathy with Christ participates in a dying of the self which belongs to sin.³⁶ This freedom is accomplished when man shares in the death of Christ to sin. All claims of sin upon him for the future are abolished, and since Christ's life of total victory over sin is now lived solely to manifest and serve God without hindrance from the conflicting power of sin, the believer who is united with the death, resurrection, and continuing life of Christ is exhorted to do likewise in verses 11ff.

In verse 11, Paul says that inasmuch as the believer has been united with Christ in his death to sin, then as far as the believers are concerned, they must also regard themselves as dead to sin. "The

³⁵Godet, op. cit., p. 248.

³⁶Traina, op. cit.

first step in passing beyond the influence of sin is to know that we have passed out of its kingdom and always to regard ourselves in that light."³⁷ The believer is to live out in actuality what he has experienced in his faith-union with Jesus Christ. He becomes conscious of his new relationship to God through Jesus Christ. This new life is lived in the environment of Christ. Its impulses, motivations, and emotions grow out of the new relationship with Christ, therefore, the believer is now alive and responsive to God through Christ.

This reckoning oneself is an imperative command. The use of the present imperative in this context involves a continuous, repeated reckoning of oneself as dead to sin and alive to God. This being "dead to sin" is an existential experience. If the body were literally dead, one would not reckon himself dead. But the death here is the kind of death which has to be reckoned; it needs to be implemented continually. As the believer is united with Christ, he continually re-experiences the death and life of Christ. Thus there is a continual need to live out what is involved in this new relationship.³⁸

The consequences of this reckoning oneself as dead to sin and alive to God are seen in verses 12-14. Since the believer has died to the old self of sin in his union with Christ, he must adopt a new

³⁷Gerald R. Cragg, "The Epistle to the Romans," The Interpreter's Bible, vol. IX, George A. Buttrick (ed.), (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 478.

³⁸Traina, op. cit.

attitude to life. Paul expresses this necessity with the present imperative along with a prohibition, "Let not sin therefore continue to reign" This involves stopping something which is presently in action. Verse 13 continues the thought, "Neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness." There is an on-going process which must be stopped.³⁹ In spite of what has happened previously in one's union with Christ (6:5-10), there is a condition of life which must be considered. The union of the believer with Christ must be practically and ethically applied by a positive and willful "reckoning" and an application of this relationship to life. What Paul says here is that there must be a total commitment to the new life which was begun in the past.

The aorist imperative in 6:13b carries the force of this commitment. It is to be instantaneous and undertaken at once. He says, "Yield yourselves to God" This is crisis. The believer must make a full commitment to take seriously and put into practice what has happened in the past. God has already reconciled the believer to Himself in the past, but Paul says that this right relationship must immediately be put into effect in the life of the believer. This is sanctification.⁴⁰ The establishment of the new relationship with Christ is expressed in terms of baptism. Thus

³⁹Dayton, op. cit., p. 45.

⁴⁰Robert A. Traina, "How Holiness Must Be Appropriated," Unpublished essay, 1967.

verses 1-10 deal with the believer's union with Christ which is understood as being justification. Only when the problem arises as to how this union can be made practically effective does the question of sanctification arise. Paul then expresses by means of these imperatives the new and deeper dimension of this relationship, the practical implementation of the union in Christ's death and resurrection. That which happened in the past, the crucifixion of the old self (6:6), is brought to its ethical completion by the complete and continuing commitment of the self to God. Paul seems to be speaking here in chapter 6 in reference to the total Christian experience. Although 6:6 may not refer primarily to sanctification as a separate and advanced state of grace, Paul realizes that there is no true Christian experience which does not result in sanctification. Rather than using 6:6 in isolation as a proof-text for sanctification as a second definite experience of the believer, one should relate it to verses 12 and 13 of chapter 6. These two latter verses elaborate and implement the implications of the death to sin in verse 6. The death by crucifixion of the old self in 6:6 finds its logical implications for sanctification in the imperative statements for unequivocal and complete ethical commitment in verses 11-14. In order for the union with Christ to be effective, it must find its outworkings in a complete surrender of oneself to the Lordship of God. This sanctification is wrought through Christ who is the power for living. Sanctification cannot be divorced from one's relationship to Christ, for it is the

quality of life which is lived in a relationship of complete openness to Him.

✓ Analysis of 6:15-23. In these concluding verses Paul repeats the question of 6:1, but with a different emphasis. In the first statement of the question, Paul asks, "Shall we sin that grace may abound?" "That" is the key term, and it implies that sin is a requisite for grace. But Paul answers by showing that the means of obtaining grace is not a continuance in sin. In 6:15, the key term is "because". Since the grace of Christ delivers from the restrictions of the law, can we say that it makes no difference to sin? Paul answers in the negative by saying that just as in 6:1 the believer does not sin to get grace, so in 6:15 he does not sin because of grace. Simply because he is a recipient of grace, the believer has no license for anti-nomianism. Thus sin neither of necessity precedes grace nor results from grace, but in fact is overcome by grace since grace sanctifies as well as justifies.⁴¹

Another difference between the questions of 6:1 and 6:15 is that verse 1 deals with the possibility of remaining in a process of sin as a habitual course of action. Verse 15, on the other hand, deals with the committing of an act of sin. Paul repudiates the idea of allowing individual acts of sin to occur simply because the believer is now under grace. He says that as servants of one master, the believers are

⁴¹Traina, op. cit., classnotes in Romans.

not to trade back and forth between allegiance to their present master and obedience to their former master. These individual acts of sin would be inconsistent with the maintenance of loyalty to God.⁴²

The rationale behind Paul's negative answer here is based on the difference between the two masters and the two kinds of servitude and the results of obedience to these two masters. Sin and righteousness are alternative forms of obedience, and one must choose between them. One cannot serve them both, for they are mutually exclusive. The image of slavery is the figure of speech which is most useful in describing this problem. Everyone in the culture to which Paul was writing knew that the master had complete and exclusive control over his slave. All the skill, energy, and time of the slave were at the master's disposal. A slave, then, could not serve two masters even though their requirements were not basically incompatible in character. Paul adds a further complicating factor in his illustration by noting that the two masters are fundamentally opposed in character and purpose. It also might be noted that a master not only requires the undivided allegiance of the slave, but he frees the slave from all the claims of any previous masters so that he is responsible to his master only.⁴³ Therefore, for a slave to perform acts of service to a former master would mean that he had forsaken his allegiance to the present

⁴²Dayton, op. cit., p. 46.

⁴³Cragg, op. cit., p. 482.

one. In the same manner, since grace has broken the lordship of sin, the believer can no longer serve his former master, but is now obligated to his new master, Christ.

The moral life, then, presents an exclusive choice so that the moral character of every life is to reflect itself in singular obedience to its master. The believer now has the responsibility to obey his new master "from the heart," that is, from an inner motivation which grows out of his complete and willful commitment to his Lord. The new allegiance to righteousness is to be followed with the same unflagging zeal which characterized their former enthusiasm for indulgence. With the same intensity, according to verse 19, they are to "present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification." The end result of their allegiance to righteousness is sanctification (19b).

In concluding his argument, Paul gives the ultimate reasons underlying the necessity to abandon subservience to sin. These reasons are related to the end result of the respective courses of action. In verse 20 he says that they formerly had served sin freely and without interference from the claims of righteousness. As Beet says, "They have therefore given the service of sin a fair trial."⁴⁴ Verse 21 asks what the results were of this life of sin, "What fruit had ye then . . . ?" These things proved to be thoroughly disgusting and frustrating.

⁴⁴Beet, op. cit., p. 186.

They are now ashamed of these things in which they formerly gloried.

As Cragg says:

The seeds of evil ripen to a bitter harvest. Besides the other forms of retribution which sin brings, there is the shame which grows more acute as a man looks back from the vantage ground of a new loyalty to the kind of service to which he once submitted. The results of sin . . . are cumulative; the man who yields his members to impurity finds that he is involved in "greater and greater iniquity" (vs. 19). A progression of that kind admits of only one conclusion: "The end of those things is death." The stifling of our higher instincts, the blinding of our truer insights, the atrophy of our finer qualities--these so separate us from the sources of true life that our existence is a foretaste of that final death wherein we are entirely cut off from God.⁴⁵

In order to show the contrasting effects of the new allegiance, Paul shows the end results of servitude to God. Just as the demands of righteousness had no claim on these people while they were serving sin, so now the demands of sin are unable to dominate them while they are serving God. The result of this service to God (v. 22) is "fruit" which results in "holiness", the end of which is "eternal life". The immediate purpose of the new service to righteousness is a life which bears the marks of holiness. This sanctification of the believer is related to the exhortation in 6:13 to "yield your members as instruments of righteousness to God." This is a call to a punctiliar kind of experience. The present imperative in 6:13 is a call to a critical change in the outworkings of one's life. Since this yielding to God in 6:13 deals with the same concept as becoming servants of God in

⁴⁵Cragg, op. cit., p. 485.

6:22, the sanctification here is the immediate result of commitment to God.⁴⁶ In committing oneself to the service of God, one becomes holy or sanctified because of his relationship with God. Just as in the Old Testament a person or object was holy only in its relationship to God, so here the believer is sanctified not by a substantial change of addition or subtraction of some entity to or from his person, but he is made holy by the new and completely open relationship which he has with God through Christ.

The end result of this relationship with God which is a relationship of holiness is "eternal life". "Eternal life" is not simply a life of endless duration, but a life which is characterized by a new quality of existence. The existence of the believer in a relationship of holiness to God results in this life of ultimate relationship to God which is qualitatively different from the life that was previously lived under sin.

Verse 23 presents the conclusion of Paul's description of this new way of life by showing the contrasting results of the two opposing types of service. The wages which are received are simply the outward recognition of work that has been done. They are given in proportion to the amount of work accomplished and are commensurate in quality with the quality of work done.⁴⁷ The servant of sin, then, gets the

⁴⁶Traina, classnotes in Romans, op. cit.

⁴⁷Cragg, op. cit.

wages that sin pays and which are in harmony qualitatively with the character of sin. Since sin is opposed to any kind of servitude or relationship to God, it must pay wages which are opposed in quality to any characteristic of God who is the source of life. The only natural wage, then, would be death, which is the exact opposite of the quality of the relationship with God, eternal life. Thus the glorious result of serving God is the reception of the free gift of eternal life which is received "through Jesus Christ".

Therefore, by being united with Jesus Christ in the closest type of interpersonal union, the believer receives through this relationship the eternal life of both present and future communion with God.

B. THE INTERPERSONAL UNION

All of the ethical exhortations in Romans 6 are inferences which are derived from one's union with Christ in baptism. The problem which now presents itself is the means by which this union is achieved and what is actually involved in such a union. This section of the chapter will deal with the psychological and hermeneutical bases for the union of the believer with Christ.

The Insights of Psychology

The concept of empathy is the primary psychological principle underlying the interpersonal union. A survey of psychological dictionaries shows that the term, "empathy," is defined in various

ways, some of which definitely contradict each other. It is possible, however, to draw some conclusions concerning the best possible usage of the word.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Lipps introduced the concept of Einfuhlung ("feeling oneself into"). Titchener proposed the term, "empathy," as a translation of this concept.⁴⁸ The translation is true to the Greek root meaning which is based on en, "into," and pathos, "passion" or "feeling." The concept originally referred to the process of motor mimicry. For example, when one contemplates a work of art he involves movements of the brows, eyes, trunk, and limbs in some way which imitates his perception of the stimulus object. The same phenomena accompany the observation of an exciting athletic event. It seems that one can sense the skill and gracefulness with which the work of art is created and the way the sports event is performed. Empathic involvement underlies these involuntary contortions.⁴⁹

Others such as Drever confine the concept of empathy to the realm of esthetic involvement alone. He writes that empathy is "feeling oneself into, and losing one's identity in, a work of art, a characteristic of the essentially aesthetic attitude or emotion."⁵⁰

⁴⁸Gordon Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961), p. 533.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰James Driver, A Dictionary of Psychology (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 83.

Empathy involves more than simply esthetic or motor involvement, however. Webster's Third New International Dictionary states that empathy is "the capacity for participating in or a vicarious experiencing of another's feelings, volitions, or ideas and sometimes another's movements to the point of executing bodily movements resembling his."⁵¹ It is not only vicarious participation in another's actions but also in his feelings. Harry Stack Sullivan says that anxiety about anything whatsoever in the mother induces anxiety in her infant.⁵² Although he does not elaborate on the dynamics of this empathy, he shows that there is a definite transfusion of attitudes here.

Arieti's Handbook of Psychiatry bears out this aspect of empathy by defining it as "the capacity of a human being to share in the feelings of another person, to experience, in effect, his feelings. One shares in this experience in quality, but not in degree, in kind but not in quantity."⁵³ It is an emotional contagion, a felt meaning which may be outside cognition.⁵⁴ Thus by empathy one identifies with the problems and difficulties of another person, he imaginatively projects his own psychological behavior by inference into an object, event, or person other than himself.⁵⁵

⁵¹Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Co., Publishers, 1967).

⁵²Harry Stack Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1953), pp. 41, 74.

⁵³Silvano Arieti (ed.), American Handbook of Psychiatry, II (New York: Basic Books, Publishers, 1959), p. 1412.

⁵⁴Ibid., I, 915.

⁵⁵Philip L. Harriman, The New Dictionary of Psychology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 52.

Lipps did not mean that one simply copies another's behavior, but that he actually enters into his perception of emotion. "There is no break between the strain, pride, sorrow or playfulness which I feel empathetically and the personality of the one I am seeking to understand."⁵⁶ One shares in the feelings and actions of another by vicarious identification with him. The feelings of another affect the observer. They sensitize and enervate him. He does not simply feel his own emotions along with another's emotions, but he feels the same emotion as the other person and he understands the other's feelings because he feels the same feelings by a vicarious sharing of experience. However, one must be careful not to posit an ontological continuity between the selves of those participating in an empathic relationship. The experience shared in empathy is shared in a functional, existential way, not in an ontological, identical way.

Empathy is not simply an intellectual perception, for Sullivan's infant does not rationally perceive his mother's anxiety, he feels it. It penetrates him. He feels her anxiety and it becomes his own. It takes intellectual perception to feel with another person, but the emotional contagion of empathy is an affective rather than an intellectual identification. It is an emotional identification with another in such a way that the perceiver vicariously experiences the same emotions and feelings as the feeling object.

⁵⁶Allport, op. cit., p. 536.

Very little literature deals with the dynamics of empathy. Some of the writers simply define it without analyzing it, while others, like Sullivan, only illustrate it without defining it. Only Arieti, it seems, deals with what actually takes place in empathy. He says that empathic communication occurs through the reading of subliminal signs of another person's behavior or emotion. In this way we apprehend the feeling affect, emotion, and attitudes of our object figure. In order for this subliminal communication to occur, he says, the persons in the circuit must be bodily present before each other. This idea of bodily presence, however, does not seem to be justified by his further statements. He says that empathy is not communicated verbally, but it may accompany language through the ring of the voice. The receiver of the message experiences the feeling state itself as a similar reverberation of feeling in his own psyche.⁵⁷

Arieti gives no reason for his assumption that the bodily presence of those in the empathic circuit is necessary. Since empathy can take place through the perception of the timbre of the voice, why cannot empathy occur between those who are only vocally connected as on a telephone? Empathy is a sharing of spirits, not simply physically conveyed subliminal signals. One can communicate attitudes and inspiring fellowship when he is physically separated from his companion. The spiritual presence of the companion is the only necessary basis for

⁵⁷Arieti, I, op. cit., p. 915.

empathy. Such a communion must exist in the realm of the spirit, and we may say that it is possible to have such communion with Christ by means of the Holy Spirit.

The basis for empathy, then, is primarily the complete self-disclosure of oneself to another person. One must know enough about the feelings and experiences of another to share his inner self and thus to "feel into" his situation before empathy can occur. Effective communication of oneself to another and the reciprocation of this communication in adequate and satisfying self-disclosure is the basis upon which empathy flourishes.⁵⁸ This self-disclosure can only occur if there is an atmosphere of honesty between the participants. The persons involved in this sharing of themselves must go beyond the mere disclosure of the "public self." They must meet each other at the level of their true selves, or at the level of the "person," as Tournier says.⁵⁹

Thus the concept of a union of experiences through empathy is an intensely personal relationship. It is not simply an intellectual assent to the desires of another, nor is it simply an objective knowledge of another, but it is the personal sharing of oneself with the self of another. This is a meeting of "persons" in an encounter

⁵⁸Sidney M. Jourard, The Transparent Self (Princeton: Van Nostrand Press, 1964), p. 12.

⁵⁹Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 136.

at the deepest level of the self. This type of encounter is the type of relationship which must be established between the believer and Christ. It is an interpersonal relationship built upon a union of selves through a sharing of personal history and experience.

The Insights of Hermeneutic

Before beginning a discussion on this topic, it will be necessary to define the meaning of the term, "hermeneutic." This is the philosophy of interpretation, the purpose of which is to lead to an understanding of an event, document, or experience. "Hermeneutic" is not to be confused with "hermeneutics," which deals with methodology, techniques, and implementation of interpretation. "Hermeneutic" is concerned primarily with basic approaches and principles of understanding, not with particular techniques and exegesis.

The hermeneutical principles will be used here in an attempt to understand how the empathic experience of the believer in baptism enables him to understand the past historical event of the death and resurrection of Christ and to apply the understanding of this event to his own personal history.

Wilhelm Dilthey, the German philosopher of the last century, developed a hermeneutic of history which deals with the reliving of the past within one's present life. His theory deals with the concept of shared life and meanings. He says that all humans have shared instincts, a least common denominator which links all men together. Man understands the past on the basis of his present experience.

Dilthey says that there is a unity of experience and existence between the past and the present. This unitary basis for all existence provides the means for understanding the past and present of other people, otherwise there would be only solipsism. What this unity results in is a commonality of lived experience. This commonality is closely related to the concept of empathy discussed above in which one person identifies with the experiences of another in an existential sharing of feelings. This type of commonality is possible because time is not the issue in such a shared relationship; there is no real rift between the past and the present when existence is understood on the basis of its unitary character.⁶⁰

Experience, according to Dilthey, has an inner and an outer manifestation. Man is able to share historically with another the commonality and empathy of this experience by means of transposition or re-enactment of historical event. The subject is able to share the experience of the object "Thou" by transposing his life into the life of the object, such as the experience which is shared by empathy. By doing this the subject is able to re-live the experience of the event by this empathic transposition. In doing this the subject is able to share the meaning of a previous historical event.⁶¹ Thus a

⁶⁰Robert A. Traina, Classnotes from Seminar in Contemporary Hermeneutic, 1967.

⁶¹Ibid.

particular historical event may have a universally shared significance on the basis of empathic transposition. The personal significance of the event, however, does not rest entirely on understanding it. One may be able to understand the event without emulating it or committing himself to it. Thus the historian may understand the event without identifying with it. But in order to re-live the event so that it becomes existentially real for him, the historian must commit himself to an empathic sharing of the event.

R.G. Collingwood sees the essence of this historical hermeneutic as re-enactment. He says that history is concerned with the interior reality of man objectified in his external behavior, and one can understand this only as he re-enacts it. In re-enactment the historian ceases to be merely a scientific spectator and internalizes the experience as a participant. In this rethinking the participant must share in the whole of the object's inner history of emotions and volitions. By inference and imagination one may project himself back through the outer doings of the object person and interiorize his inner life. It must be clarified, however, that although the thoughts of the object person may be repeated by the participant so that both may share the same thought, the act of rethinking is not the same act as the original act of thinking. The content is the same but the event is not.⁶²

⁶²R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 287ff.

In regard to the use of imagination in the process of re-enactment, one may say that it is only through the disciplined use of imagination that the historian is enabled to move from the present situation to the past situation and to relive it. Such a use of imagination is made by a detective who solves a crime. He gathers all the facts possible, then piecing them together, he fills in the gaps inferentially on the basis of his own self-knowledge and reconstructs a motive. Thus by imagination one is able to inferentially establish an empathic relationship with the historical object. In doing this the participant-historian re-experiences the experiences of the object. He is able to do this because there is a final continuity of experience between the knower and the known. This commonality of life and existence is experienced by the means of imagination and empathy so that the past man who acts is united in experience with the present man who acts. They share the same experience.⁶³

The Conclusions for Union

These concepts of empathy, commonality, and re-enactment are extremely relevant for an understanding of Paul's concept of union with Christ. The prominence of this concept of union in Paul's thought is seen in the fact that he uses the phrase "in Christ" or

⁶³Traina, op. cit., Hermeneutic

"in the Lord" 164 times in his writings.⁶⁴ These phrases, and particularly Paul's statements at this point in Romans 6, can best be elucidated on the basis of the interpersonal relationships as expressed in the findings of psychology and hermeneutic.

When he speaks of the believer's being united with Christ in Romans 6, Paul may be understood as meaning that the believer is an act of faith by empathy and communion actually shares the experience of Christ. Through faith the believer is able to establish an empathic relationship with Christ which brings together in a commonality of experience the past and present historical experiences. This involves a re-enactment in the believer of the experiences between Christ and the believer. By this re-enactment of faith the believer can re-create and re-live Christ's history, and when one does re-live it, something happens to him. This is the purpose of the kerygma, for when one hears the story of Christ in faith, his history interiorizes the history of Christ. His cross becomes the believer's cross, and the believer realizes the significance of death and is enabled to die to sin himself.⁶⁵

This concept of re-enactment and sharing of experiences is quite similar to the Old Testament commemoration of the events of the

⁶⁴Alfred Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism: Christ in the Mystical Teaching of St. Paul (Edinburgh-London: Nelson, 1960), p. 22.

⁶⁵Traina, op. cit., Romans.

Exodus and other commemorative rites. In the annual commemoration of these past events, the worshippers re-enacted their deliverance so that the past event took on a present significance for them, as was seen in the previous chapter.

In this same manner the New Testament sacraments are commemorative of our Lord's life and death. In the Lord's Supper, the believer commemorates the sacrifice of Christ, and in this commemoration he recalls this past event in faith. In this remembrance he re-enacts the once-for-all event of Christ's death so that this historical event becomes a present experience for him.

In the same way, when Paul speaks of dying and rising with Christ in the act of faith in baptism, the believer through faith empathically shares in the death and resurrection of Christ. He experiences the meaning and emotions of Christ's experiences so that an interpenetration of his spirit and Christ's Spirit occurs. Because of this union in faith and empathy, the believer may now share a new kind of existence. He and Christ are able to share themselves; they inspire each other. A dynamic relationship exists between the believer and Christ. Jourard says, "Experience seems to be as transfusable as blood, and it can be as invigorating."⁶⁶ This shared experience between the believer and Christ produces a bond of fellowship which radically shapes the believer's life, for he is

⁶⁶Jourard, op. cit., p. 12.

"filled" with Christ's Spirit in a functional sense. He is in Christ and Christ is in him, because their spirits commingle. This union, however, is not spatial and substantialistic; it is dynamic and existential. It is an interpersonal union, not a spatial and ontological union. The Spirit of Christ "inspirits" the believer and affects him because of the empathic relationship of communion which relates them.⁶⁷

This union is not that of a static mysticism in which the self is lost in the ocean of God. Such an experience omits the historical basis of the event of Christ and allows for no development of the individual self. On the contrary, the self is not confused with the Self of God in this interpersonal relationship. This is the same kind of empathic relationship which human friends can have. In such a relationship two people become so involved by empathy that they are able to share each other's experiences. What one of the persons experiences may be communicated so that both may share the same attitudes and motivations.⁶⁸ In such an experience each person's inner self communicates with the inner self of the other. Such role involvement seems to be the human analogue to the Divine-human encounter of the union with Christ.

In the encounter of Christ's Spirit and man's spirit there is

⁶⁷Traina, op. cit., Romans.

⁶⁸George H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), p. 253.

an interpersonal involvement of a personal Christ with a human person. This is not an ontological union, but an existential, empathic sharing of spirits. In this way Christ becomes the center of the person. The person is motivated by His Spirit and He is affected by his feelings and will. All of life is affected by this relationship--the will is given direction, the emotions are given new life, and the repressed complexes are exposed to the light of Christ. It is this relationship of which Paul speaks in Galatians 2:20:

For I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

The person, "I," does the living, but the motivation and pattern of life is shaped by the "Christ who lives in me."

In this kind of life shared with Christ, the "real self" is exposed, the "person" shines forth, and the "personage," or role, reflects the harmony of the inner and outer selves. This kind of life oriented around Christ and empowered by His love is a perfect empathic relationship. Christ's desires become the desires of the self. Self-disclosure is complete and dynamically continuous. The openness to Christ and His freely flowing love sets the person free from enslavement to self and unrighteous life-patterns, and he is fully yielded to the will of Christ. This is the highest kind of ego-orientation.

Stewart says that this experience of union with the Risen

Christ was what made the apostles the mighty men of God they were.⁶⁹

Without the union of the believer with the past historical Christ through empathy with the present reality of His Spirit, there could be no benefit in the atonement for the present believer. Through the Holy Spirit the past becomes present for the believer and Christ no longer is a remote historical event. By empathy the believer meets the Christ of the past and through the Holy Spirit the past becomes the present reality in which the believer grounds his life and through which he receives his dynamic motivation for devotion and service.

In this sharing of spirits with Christ, sanctification is seen in its true form as the "unfolding of Christ's own character within the believer's life."⁷⁰ Thus the end result of union with Christ in baptism is union with Him in sanctification. The entire Christian life of union with Christ is a continuum and sanctification is seen in its true light as being the unfolding of the attitudes of Christ into the ethics of daily living. Sanctification is thus the unhindered empathic relationship between Christ and the believer which expresses itself in proper Christ-like ethical conduct.

C. SUMMARY

In Romans 6, Paul is thus saying that when one is baptized into

⁶⁹James Stewart, A Man in Christ (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1964), p. 136.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 153.

an interpersonal union with Christ through faith, the logical out-working of this union is a freedom from the bondage of sin and a complete openness to Christ. As the believer appropriates the full meaning of this relationship, he becomes motivated fully by Christ through his union with Him. This full yieldedness and willingness to put this relationship to work in practical experience, as seen in verses 12ff, is sanctification.

The union with Christ about which Paul speaks is affected by faith through empathy and the interiority of experience which comes as a result of the re-enactment of the event of the crucifixion. The interpersonal relationship which accompanies such an empathic union enables the believer to be motivated fully by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This life of orientation around Christ is the basis of the life of dynamic interpersonal motivation by Jesus Christ which is understood as sanctification.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTERPERSONAL CONCEPT OF SANCTIFICATION

The purpose of this chapter is to make a practical application of the findings concerning the interpersonal union with Christ. The interpersonal concept of sanctification will be used to present a possible alternative to the substantialistic theories of sanctification. Other psychological insights will be used to interpret sanctification in terms of the interpersonal theory. Finally, certain practical problems which have grown out of a substantialistic or overly severe interpretation of sanctification will be studied in an attempt to provide some positive guidelines for the development of a theology of sanctification.

A. THE SUBSTANTIALISTIC PROBLEM

One of the most difficult problems lying in the way of a proper understanding of sanctification is the tendency to think of sin as a substance. The New Testament metaphors which describe the condition of sin in man are often thought of as denoting some sort of tangibility or "thingness" about sin. Such terms as "the flesh" (Gal. 5:19, 24); "the carnal mind" or "the mind of the flesh" (Rom. 8:6-7); "carnal" (Rom. 7:14; I Cor. 3:1, 3-4); "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24); "the old man" (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22); "the body of

sin" (Rom. 6:6) and other similar terms are interpreted as having material reality.¹ Such imagery is an accommodation to human minds which can sometimes grasp a concept more easily if it is presented pictorially.

The Use of Metaphor

The metaphor plays a large part in thinking, speaking, and writing, and Biblical literature is no exception. There is great richness of content in metaphors which refer to Christ as "Light," "Life," Bread of Life," "Good Shepherd," "Great Physician," "Rock of Ages," and in many other ways. While being useful, however, metaphor has its dangers. It can be a hindrance to thinking and may mislead one in his thought processes if he does not understand its function. A metaphor is intended simply to suggest a likeness between two things, not the identification of them. The metaphors above which refer to Christ simply suggest different aspects of Him; they are not taken in isolation as the full statement of truth about Him.²

The Problem of Reification

In spite of the obvious characteristics of the metaphor, there is a tendency among many people to engage in the reification

¹W.T. Purkiser, Sanctification and Its Synonyms (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1961), pp. 50, 55.

²R. Lees, "Tyranny of Metaphor in Religious Writing," London Quarterly Review, 171, (October, 1946), pp. 346-348.

of abstract qualities. This is the kind of "thing thinking" in which all reality is thought to consist only of "things." Anything which cannot be weighed, measured, counted, located in space, or pictured in the imagination tends to be regarded as unreal.³ Karl Menninger refers to this problem in relation to teaching:

This is the perennial dilemma of the teacher: the teaching of facts and figures versus the teaching of truth. To convey a model, a teacher must reify the diagram and declare clearly what cannot be seen at all. The student must "learn" things in order to realize subsequently that they are not quite the way he learned them. But by that time he will have gotten into the spirit of the matter, and from this he may arrive at some approximation of the truth, an approximation he will continue to revise all his life long.⁴

The problem is not in the reification of concepts in order to understand them, but in failing to realize that reification has taken place.

This problem of reification of language, if it is not understood, leads one into the error of regarding the condition of sin as a substance which must be either destroyed or removed. It is "a sort of cancer to be cut out, a rotten tooth to be pulled, or a stump to be blasted out."⁵ Sin, however, is not a substantial thing which can be dealt with physically. Rather, sin must be understood in interpersonal terms as a dynamic relationship between

³Purkiser, op. cit., p. 50.

⁴Karl Menninger, Theory of Psychoanalytic Technique (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 14.

⁵Purkiser, op. cit., p. 51

man and God. It is an attributive reality which can have no existence except in relation to divine and human persons. There could be no moral qualities whatsoever in the universe if there were no persons. The reality of sin, then, does not consist within sin itself, but only in relationships between personal beings. As Dr. L.T. Corlett has said, "Carnality has no capital of its own."⁶

In the Old Testament, as has been shown above, sin is understood as a relational concept. As Wright was previously quoted as saying, "Sin is the violation of the covenant and rebellion against God's personal lordship . . . It is a violation of relationship, a betrayal of trust."⁷

Salvation, then; is the relationship of interpersonal union with Jesus Christ. In Him, the broken relationship between man and God was restored. By union with Christ in an interpersonal relationship, one is reconciled and restored to communion with God. Sanctification, then, is not the substantialistic removal of some element from man's personality, but the full and complete opening of oneself to the self of God in Christ so that there is no longer any barrier to self-disclosure. An interpenetration of spirits is then possible in such a relationship and a mutual "inspiring" between the believer and Christ takes place.

⁶Ibid., pp. 51, 57.

⁷G. Ernest Wright and Reginald K. Fuller, The Book of the Acts of God (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1960), p. 94.

The Usage of Terms

In thus viewing sanctification in relational terms, the problem of misunderstanding of terms is minimized. Some of the metaphors which are used to describe sanctification have often been abused. Such terms as "cleansing," "purify," and "eradication" should be understood as metaphors which are used to explain the dynamics of the interpersonal relationships in sanctification. These figures should be used to express the truth that the essence of holiness is a personal relationship with Christ which enables one to gain and maintain victory over sin. As long as such terms are clearly understood as metaphors which describe interpersonal concepts, they perhaps can be used with some benefit.

The problem of the usage of these terms, however, is that very often the metaphorical content is lost so that they are used to express substantialistic concepts. When this happens, sin is understood as a substantial entity which must be physically removed from the believer. It must be "cleansed" or "eradicated," using these words in a literal and substantialistic sense. Such a conception results in stumbling back into the pitfall of reification. Since sin must be understood not as a substantial entity, but as a dynamic interpersonal relationship, such a materialistic usage of these terms is unacceptable. Sanctification must be understood as the redirection and re-orientation of motivations, tendencies, dispositions, and attitudes. When sanctification is thus understood as the identification of one's self with the self of Christ, such interpersonal terms

as "inspiration," "empathy," "interpersonal union," or "love" could be used profitably. Biblical terms which indicate a change in personal relationships, such as "dead to sin," "alive to God," "in Christ," and terms which are related to the marriage relationship are perhaps even more effective. In any case, words which reflect an undue degree of the substantialistic concept should be used with caution.

Other Pauline terms such as "crucify," "mortify," "put to death," and "strip off" must be understood correctly. These terms must be translated into language which makes clear just what is eliminated and what remains.

Cattell presents an answer to this problem by using the illustration of a horseshoe magnet under a sheet of paper which contains iron filings. The filings arrange themselves around both poles in overlapping patterns. These two patterns he likens to the "double minded man" whose life is oriented around both himself and God. When the "old man" is crucified, it is the old pattern of life which stands off-center from God which ceases to exist. When the right relationship with God is established through union with Christ in all its implications, the self as a pole apart from God yields up its separateness and independence and in complete surrender unites itself "with Christ in God." It is not the self, but the pattern of life created by the self which ceases to exist. The former pattern of life has been re-oriented around Christ. The old self has been "crucified" in the sense that it no longer exists, because the self

has changed its center.⁸

The new identity of the self as it has been re-oriented through the inspiration of the new interpersonal relationship with Christ may be expressed by means of the analogy of the tuning of a piano. The tuner tightens some of the strings and loosens others until all are brought into a harmonious relationship to the central key, but when he finishes, the tuner does not go behind the piano and sweep up a group of excess notes. Nothing has been removed in substance, but the relationship of the keys to each other has been changed.

Sanctification, then, must be understood not as the substantialistic removal or addition of an entity from or to one's personality, but it must be seen as the re-orientation of the self around the self of Christ in a dynamic interpenetration of spirits and experiences. When the believer opens himself to the influence of Christ in complete self-disclosure and shares empathically in the life of Christ, then all the dynamic power and inspiration of Christ inspirits the believer so that his relationship to his Lord overshadows and expels his former relationships to any un-Christ-like sources. This is entire sanctification. It is best expressed as "the expulsive power of a new affection," in the words of Thomas Chalmers.

Since sanctification is the correction of a wrong relationship

⁸Everett L. Cattell, The Spirit of Holiness (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 27.

between the believer and God rather than the eradication of something material, the new interpersonal relationship can be as quickly lost as it was gained. A relationship must be continually renewed and developed if it is to remain useful and dynamic. It must be maintained by continual communion, surrender, forgiveness, and cleansing. The faith by which the relationship was established is necessary for its maintenance and growth. The principles of honesty and self-giving which are so necessary in a human love relationship are even more vital in the relationship of interpersonal communion between Christ and the fully committed believer.

The Misunderstanding of "Filling"

Another problem which grows out of the substantialistic error is a misunderstanding of the image of being "filled with the Spirit." The image of "filling" is not a substantialistic concept which suggests a fractional understanding of the Holy Spirit. The implication of the substantialistic view is that one can receive a degree of the Holy Spirit and then progressively receive more and more of Him.⁹ Augsburg explains the problem thus:

The term "filled" could be translated "possessed." The Spirit-filled life, or Spirit-possessed life, is not one in which we have a certain amount of the Spirit, but rather one in which He possesses all of us. The Spirit-filled life is one in which the Spirit expresses Himself within an individual as a controlling and overflowing force. The condition is one of yieldedness on our part.

⁹Robert A. Traina, Classnotes on Romans, 1966.

We are as filled with the Spirit as we are emptied of self. Since yieldedness is a voluntary attitude, it follows that we are just as filled with the Spirit as we want to be.¹⁰

The image of "filling," then, suggests that the self is a vessel which the Spirit fills with Himself. This "filling" is metaphorical and suggests analogy, not identity. The question is not one of how much of the Holy Spirit the self possesses, but of how fully the self is possessed and motivated by the Spirit of Christ. The presence of the Holy Spirit is continuous with the believer at all times, but Pentecost means that the believer has become fully motivated by the Holy Spirit. The difference in one's life before and after Pentecost is not in the degree of the presence of the Holy Spirit as an entity, for He cannot be conceived of in fractions, but in the degree of motivation He provides within one's personality.¹¹

Thus the "filling of the Holy Spirit" is correctly understood as the opening of oneself to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit so that a quality of interpersonal relationship is established in which there is complete self-disclosure, empathy, and inspiration. Sanctification is the unhindered inspiration of the Spirit of Christ which fully motivates the life of one who is fully yielded and open to Him in an interpersonal relationship of empathy and commonality

¹⁰Myron Augsburger, Quench Not the Spirit (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1965), pp. 17-18, cited by Wm. M. Greathouse, "Full Salvation and Its Concomitants," The Word and the Doctrine (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), p. 218.

¹¹Traina, op. cit., Romans.

of experience.

B. THE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In applying these findings concerning the interpersonal relationship of sanctification, it will be necessary to first present some of the obstacles to a sound theology of sanctification and then to apply the insights of the interpersonal concept of sanctification in an attempt to satisfactorily solve these problems.

The Obstacles to Theology

The Problem of Honesty. Dr. E. Stanley Jones has publicly stated at various times, "A religion that does not hold my head will soon not hold my heart." In like manner, a doctrine of sanctification that does not hold one's intellectual respect will soon not hold his heart. It is absolutely necessary to face honestly the questions one has concerning the dynamics of sanctification and their practicality if he is to be conscientious in his faith. How can the nagging questions of personal experience be answered, and how can these answers be incorporated into one's theology of sanctification?

One problem that is often faced is how to discern one's motivations and purposes in all situations. There are times when one must examine his motivations and honestly evaluate them. When a young minister asked an outstanding theologian in the Wesleyan movement how one could be desperately honest with himself and without a sense of guilt be certain at all times that his every action and

word were prompted by love, the theologian replied, "Many young pastors are asking these questions all across the country, but watch who you ask them to, for you will get your head chopped off."¹²

It seems that such questions should be explored and provided with honest answers. To suppress these problems and refuse to face them is both theologically and psychologically unsound. A life that experiences full self-disclosure to Christ cannot refuse to be open and honest with itself. The greatest barrier to self-disclosure and empathic involvement is a dishonest presentation of a "public self." Also, in an atmosphere where honesty is threatened, a person learns to display a "highly expurgated version of his self."¹³ A relationship with Jesus Christ which is to develop and mature cannot exist without the brutal, yet trusting, honesty which accompanies an untiring search for truth.

The Problem of Repressed Complexes. Perhaps an even greater obstacle to the development of a sound theology of sanctification is a failure to understand the distinction between positively sinful impulses and the maladjustive impulses which derive from repressed complexes in the personality. A misunderstanding at this point can lead to overstatement as to what sanctification involves, and thus

¹²B.F. Wilson, "Telescoping Theology" (Essay delivered to Wesleyan Methodist Ministers' Convention, Oak Glen Pines, California, 1968).

¹³Sidney M. Jourard, The Transparent Self (Princeton: Van Nostrand Press, 1964), p. 11.

may cause much damage to those who because of these repressed complexes are unable to achieve the ideals which they see presented before them.

These repressed complexes are, according to Mavis:

Emotionally toned feelings, memories, and ideas that were excluded from the conscious because they were stressful, humiliating, and painful. These feelings, memories, and ideas became buried in the unconscious beyond the reach of volitional recall, but they remained dynamic, being the source of many unconscious urges. Repressed complexes, representing some of the deep drives of human personality, exert an enormous influence upon human behaviour. They represent an inner dynamic for maladjustive behaviour.¹⁴

Both sinful desires and repressed complexes seek fulfillment in ways which may be socially acceptable. The objectives of sinful impulses are expressed in human pride and sensuality. On the contrary, the objectives of repressed urges may be to fulfill needs that are essential to personality, such as security, love and adequacy. Sinful urges move toward self-gratification, while repressed complexes usually move toward personality fulfillment.¹⁵

An example of the dynamics of repressed complexes is presented by Mavis in his book, The Psychology of Christian Experience. A sincere Christian, Gordon Lowell, approached his pastor for counsel about his strong tendency toward "ego enhancement". He had a strong

¹⁴W. Curry Mavis, "Repressed Complexes and Christian Maturity," The Word and the Doctrine, Kenneth Geiger (ed.), (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), p. 308.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 309.

impulse to seek preferment over others. He constantly wished for church offices and was very sensitive if his abilities were not recognized and rewarded. He responded quickly to commendation, but could not tolerate personal criticism. In the course of counseling, it was learned that Lowell had been reared in a home in which he had been deprived of a genuine sense of belonging and love. Early in life he had developed an extravagant desire to be accepted and loved. Further insight into his problem made it clear that Lowell's tendencies toward self-enhancement were not necessarily derived from sinful urges. He was seeking to be accepted into the group, and his repressed complexes had motivated him to seek acceptance in the wrong ways.¹⁶

Other problems such as rationalization, aggression, and scrupulosity may cause a great deal of spiritual drag without necessarily growing out of sinful urges. The complexes usually originate from frustrating experiences early in life, and not necessarily out of one's own personal sin. They are an attempt to meet unfulfilled personality needs.¹⁷ A theology of sanctification which does not consider such problems will cause much mental anguish and unnecessary guilt among its followers.

In considering such problems, however, one must not fail to

¹⁶W. Curry Mavis, The Psychology of Christian Experience (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), pp. 64f.

¹⁷Mavis, "Repressed Complexes and Christian Maturity," op. cit., p. 309.

suggest a viable and Biblical solution to them. There are those who believe that it is overly hazardous to recognize these repressed urges as impulses to wrongdoing, because many people may then excuse sinful urges by saying that they are maladjustive impulses.¹⁸ The possibility of the misuse of these psychological insights, however, does not exonerate responsible theologians from the necessity of understanding and ministering to the complex aspects of the human personality.

The first step in understanding and dealing with these maladjustive complexes is to recognize their existence. One may attempt to make this distinction by examining the direction and purpose of his impulses. Since sinful urges tend to seek gratification of sensual desires in an attitude of hostility to God while repressed urges in Christians seek the fulfillment of valid personality needs in an attitude of love toward God, one can begin to discern whether he is acting out of the motivation of a repressed complex or not.¹⁹ In seeking this discernment, the greatest spiritual resource one may have is the inspiration and guidance of an interpersonal relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus said that He would guide His followers into all truth (John 16:13), and this involves truth about themselves. By the light of the believer's

¹⁸Ibid., p. 313.

¹⁹Ibid.

fully surrendered relationship to Christ, he is enabled to see himself in a progressively more clear way. As the personality of Christ continues to inspire his own personality, the believer begins to discern those aspects of his personality which are a hindrance to his relationship. As these repressed complexes begin to be identified as they are revealed by the inspiring and correcting presence of Christ's Spirit, the basic step of correction has been taken.

As the relationship of the believer to Christ matures, so does the desire to rid one's personality of all barriers to continued harmony and union. At this point the will of the believer to be Christ's and His alone must be continually exercised. There seems to be a psychic resistance in the personality against the recognition of repressed material. Understanding oneself and completely surrendering the self to Christ on a continual basis is not an easy matter.

Jennings says that John Wesley's "amazing life and labors would have been impossible had he not by a sheer exercise of his will set himself to a life of disciplined, methodical practice of holiness."²⁰ In the same way, the believer must maintain and develop his own personal insight and develop in his interpersonal relationship to the Holy Spirit.

A Biblical example of a person who by his devotion to Christ and his willingness to admit his internal imperfections even after

²⁰Otho Jennings, "Areas of Growth After Sanctification," Further Insights Into Holiness, Kenneth Geiger (ed.) (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1963), p. 151.

Pentecost was Peter. Even though God had revealed to him that his racial-prejudice complex and his prejudice against unclean meats were wrong (Acts 10:15), it was only later through the influence of Paul that Peter was able to understand his inability to obey fully God's injunctions against prejudice (Gal. 2:11-18).²¹ Peter's blustering claims about his loyalty to Jesus may well have been attempts to cover up the weakness and insecurity which lay beneath the surface of his consciousness. His failures had evidently re-inforced his fears of inadequacy and his need for acceptance. Therefore, when the Judaizers confronted him, his repressed complexes of inadequacy and the need for acceptance simply overpowered his higher knowledge of what was right. With Paul's help, he was able to overcome these problems.

The Suggestions for Theology

The Emphasis on Maturity. The crisis element of the interpersonal concept of sanctification has been emphasized in the analysis of the imperatives in Romans 6:12-13. The interpersonal relationship which was established at conversion and fully implemented at the time of sanctification must be developed continually so that the believer is enabled to express ethically the maturity which he receives from the inspiration of his communion with Christ. This Christian maturity will involve a unity of personality and an ability to relate

²¹Mavis, "Repressed Complexes and Christian Maturity," op. cit., p. 315.

more openly and satisfactorily with himself, others, and God. Although not writing in a theological context, Gordon Allport presents an excellent analysis of the dynamics and effects of maturity.

First of all, a mature person is one who can make the welfare of others identical with his own. This is an ideal which Jesus expressed when He said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Second, maturity requires a warm relating of self to others, examples of which include tolerance, compassion, and proper sexual adjustments. Third, the mature person possesses proper emotional security, and has learned to accept himself as well as facts of life such as sex, death, dangers, and deprivation. He has developed proper self-control and a sense of proportion toward such factors as time, taxes, death, and disaster. Fourth, the mature person possesses realistic perceptions, skills and assignments; that is, he had a keen sense of reality. Fifth, maturity involves self-objectification, a complete absence of objectification and a keen insight into oneself as he is. Finally, the mature person has a unifying philosophy of life and a clear comprehension of life's purpose.²²

In these statements concerning maturity, the basic characteristic is a proper interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship. The mature person is one who can properly relate to himself, others, and his environment and who has a proper relationship to life's ultimate

²²Gordon Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961), pp. 275ff.

meanings. In a satisfying and growing interpersonal relationship to Jesus Christ, one finds the dynamic motivation which inspires the development of such characteristics of maturity. When one shares all the adequacy of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, he has unbounded resources to incorporate into his own personality. A theology of sanctification must involve the ability of the believer to achieve this kind of total maturity of personality through the continued inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Emphasis on Faith. Much traditional theology has dealt more with the external manifestations of one's Christian experience than on the internal relationship with Jesus Christ. There has been a tendency for the attention of the sanctified believer to be focused on his own person and actions rather than on the Person of Jesus Christ. The result has been the attempt to standardize behavior on the basis of what the ideal Christian ought to do. This legalistic approach has tended to stereotype appearance and behavior to the neglect of the development of individual personality. This approach is simply a reflection of the neo-Platonic philosophy of universals in which a universal standard of piety has been presented as the norm for all believers. Such conformity is based on an impersonal legalistic code rather than on the personal relationship of each unique person with Christ.

The alternative to this type of ideal-centered philosophy which places human effort at conformity in the foreground is the theology of

an individual relationship based on faith as interpersonal trust between God and man. The emphasis is placed on abiding in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, not on outward conformity to an ideal. This emphasis on the faith-relationship is a comfort to those who have never been able to measure up to certain pre-existing ideals, and it is a threat to those who have placed the confidence of their salvation in their own ability to conform.

Thus it is by faith that one is personally united with Jesus Christ, and it is by faith alone that he remains in this empathic relationship.

The Emphasis on Empathy. In seeking a theology which allows for the individual growth and creativity of each person, one must incorporate the concept of empathy. In a dynamic interpersonal relationship with Jesus Christ, one is able to mature and develop as the liberty of this trusting person-to-person dialogue opens the possibility of complete self-abandonment. The person who through faith has abandoned himself fully to Christ is liberated from the determinism of moralistic codes and he finds resources which help him overcome the tyranny of his repressed complexes. Through the personal relationship of empathy with Christ, one finds the answers to his own inner person and to life. The believer and Christ are enabled to share the destinies of one another through this empathic relationship, and the result of this sharing is not bondage, but the liberty of grace.²³

²³Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 224.

As this empathy with Christ develops and is understood more fully, the believer develops in conformity with the increased knowledge and inspiration of Christ. The life of Christ is lived through him in the ultimate expression of self-giving. As one identifies his life with the life of Christ and willfully applies to life the implications of this relationship, he expresses the kind of Christ-likeness which Paul presents in his theology of union with Christ.

The practical results of this empathic relationship are the release from a morbid loneliness and an understanding of the ebb and flow of the spiritual life. Loneliness is by no means a minor problem in the lives of many professed Christians. Keith Miller observes that this loneliness pervades even the intimate arena of relatively successful marriages. In the inner life of marriage, "the soul of marriage," there can be a conflict of egos in a lonely struggle for supremacy, even when the external observer sees nothing but harmony.²⁴ Such tension results from a lack of communication of the real self. As long as full self-disclosure is denied, conflict will remain.

The most satisfactory answer to such a problem is the learning of self-disclosure and the experiencing of empathy through an honest interpersonal union with Jesus Christ. When the meaning of empathic sharing is learned in one's relationship to Him, then that person is enabled to involve himself in a similar empathic self-disclosure with

²⁴Keith Miller, The Taste of New Wine (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1965), p. 46.

a meaningful recipient of his love. Thus the fellowship involved in union with Christ may result in the ability to share one's self with others.

An understanding of the dynamics of the empathic relationship also enables one to understand the somewhat fluctuating influence of the Holy Spirit in the life that is lived in an interpersonal union with Christ. This ebb and flow in the spiritual life is simply a symptom of human weakness. As in an interpersonal relationship with another person, one is not always able to maintain the fellowship on a specific level, so in one's relationship to Christ there is a fluctuating relationship. The human person is unable to maintain an intensity of concentration over an indefinitely long period of time. As a result of this characteristic, one maintains and renews his relationship with Christ at certain intervals. These points at which the relationship is deepened involve specific periods of increased motivation by Christ.

John Wesley recognized this phenomenon as a part of the assurance of the "filling of the Spirit:"

As, when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit, that our sins were forgiven; so, when we were sanctified, he bore witness, that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger, sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.²⁵

²⁵John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley, vol. XI (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p.

The relationship of sanctification, then, is a love relationship which develops like human relationships, sometimes advancing, and sometimes receding. This understanding of the way in which sanctification develops as a relationship is very helpful in correcting the substantialistic concept that sanctification is a thing one receives, and it will always be present in the same degree and with the same effects. Such an absolutistic concept arouses much confusion and unnecessary guilt.

In order to develop fully as a free individual in an empathic relationship with Jesus Christ, one must realize that sanctification is not ultimately the result of how much he is able to allow Christ to love him and motivate him. Reconciliation and justification involve the establishment of one's relationship to Christ, but sanctification involves the degree to which the believer allows this relationship to affect him. No one can live in the awareness that he is truly open to Christ's love without being freed from former motivations, inspired by the new motivations of Christ's self, and raised to a new level of life altogether. When one ceases his attempts to satisfy external, impersonal standards and begins to live in the inspiration of his new life in Christ, he is freed from the anxiety, uncertainty, and guilt of whether or not he has "it." One's concern becomes whether or not Christ fully has him.

A most beautiful example of this confidence which grows out of this interpersonal relationship of empathic love is the experience of

the mother whose daughter was born with the beginnings of an extra ear. The people outside the window of the nursery in the hospital were saying, "Isn't that terrible?" But with true love the mother said in her heart, "Little girl, you belong to me and I would not trade you for all the little girls in the world. You are mine; you are a part of me."

The mother told her pastor that her entire sanctification could be dated from the time she really believed Christ felt that way about her. This is the joy and security of a love relationship. It is this kind of personal assurance and inspiration which results from an interpersonal relationship of sanctification, a relationship of love and empathy with Jesus Christ.²⁶

C. SUMMARY

A proper understanding of sanctification, then, must grow out of a knowledge of the interpersonal relationships between man and God. Substantialistic concepts which grow out of the reification of language are not sufficient to express the dynamic interpenetration of experiences between Christ and the believer. Sanctification should be understood as the complete self-disclosure to Christ which effects an empathic union with Him.

Some of the obstacles to a sound theology of sanctification,

²⁶Wilson, op. cit.

such as misunderstanding and misinterpretation of terminology and personality, can be overcome by a proper understanding of the dynamics of maturity and faith. Interpersonal concepts such as empathy should be used to properly express the deeper levels of union with Christ. Such insights as these are useful in overcoming the substantialistic approach and in developing an awareness of the theological implications of union with Christ in the personal relationship of sanctification.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. THE SUMMARY

Sanctification as presented by St. Paul in Romans chapter six can best be understood as an interpersonal relationship with Jesus Christ. In explaining the relationship of the believer with Christ in this way, Paul is using a basis for religion which was extremely important in the Old Testament.

In studying Old Testament religion, one finds that its basic character is interpersonal. The relationship of Israel to Yahweh was based upon the personal character of the interaction between them as expressed in the interpersonal covenant relationship. The very character of the Mosaic covenant was personal; it was a relationship of mutual trust and obligation, and is best understood as a personal relationship rather than an impersonal, legalistic code.

The Law itself was not a code of arbitrary, negative statutes as is sometimes believed. On the contrary, it was the personal expression of Yahweh's concern for and guidance of Israel. It was through the Law that Yahweh established a direct relationship with His people. Since the Law, then, was primarily personal, any breach of the Law involved a personal affront to Yahweh. Because of this personal basis of the Law, sin was generally understood as a breach of one's personal relationship with Yahweh. On the same personal basis,

forgiveness also was the personal restoration of Israel's relationship with Yahweh.

In entering and maintaining this personal covenant, Israel expressed her loyalty to Yahweh through faith. This faith is best defined as being interpersonal trust in the Person of Yahweh. The external conditions of the covenant were simply the application and demonstration of the basic requirement of interpersonal faith. It was because Israel maintained a personal faith-relationship with Yahweh that she remained in the covenant relationship, not simply because of her faithful execution of the external rites, important though they were. Thus Israel remained in the covenant relationship with Yahweh because of her personal trust in and surrender to the Person of Yahweh.

It was this element of the personal love-relationship to Yahweh that became the theme of the prophets. At no other place in the Old Testament is the beauty and power of this love-relationship more adequately expressed than in Hosea's presentation of the meaning and strength of the marriage relationship.

In view of these findings, then, it may be said that the basis of the religion of the Old Testament as expressed through the covenant is the interpersonal character of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel.

Not only in the Old Testament, however, is man's relationship with God understood as interpersonal. In Romans chapter six, St. Paul expresses this interpersonal relationship in terms of union with

Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. The rite of baptism is used as the figure which expresses the entrance into this relationship.

In analyzing Romans 6, one finds that it is through this interpersonal union with Christ that the believer is released from his bondage to sin. This freedom from sin must be understood only in terms of one's continuing relationship to Christ. There is freedom from sin only in an interpersonal union with Jesus Christ through a faith-relationship.

The interpersonal union which one has with Christ through faith is best understood not as an ontological or substantial union, but as an empathic and existential union. The insights of psychology are helpful at this point in describing the dynamics of a relationship of empathy. Certain hermeneutical principles concerning commonality and interiority of experience also assist in the elucidation of this relationship.

This relationship of empathic openness to Jesus Christ constitutes Paul's concept of sanctification in Romans chapter six. It is only when the believer so opens himself to Christ that the motivations of the Saviour become his motivations that he can experience the power of sanctification as freedom from sin.

This understanding of sanctification should be applied to theological problems concerning this subject. In approaching the theology of sanctification from an interpersonal basis, many problems of word usage and reification of metaphors could be avoided, and the

problem of repressed complexes in the Christian could be more easily understood and more effectively treated.

B. THE CONCLUSION

In view of these facts, it may be affirmed that the concept of union with Christ in Romans 6 is to be understood interpersonally in terms of the relationship of empathy between the believer and Christ. Sanctification as Paul understands it is not the insertion of a substance within a person nor the removal of a physical entity from him, but it is the redirection of his entire personality and a re-orientation of his motivations, feelings, attitudes, and desires around the Self of Jesus Christ. The sanctified believer never achieves a static, absolute state in which he has become holy in himself, for he can only be holy as he is related to the Spirit of Christ in a relationship of complete openness and self-disclosure. It is in this relationship that the Christian finds initial and continual victory over sin and love unimpeded toward God. In this relationship with Jesus Christ one truly experiences the fulness of the abundant life and the gift of God which is eternal life.

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